

# Connecticut Common School Journal.

Published under the direction of the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools.

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## PROSPECTUS TO VOL. II.

THE CONNECTICUT COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL will continue to be published under the direction of the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, and the editorial charge of the Secretary of the Board.

All communications intended for the Journal, may be addressed to HENRY BARNARD, 2d., Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, Hartford—post paid.

### TERMS.

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## WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE COMMON SCHOOLS THIS WINTER?

Much can be done to improve our schools, by a faithful and intelligent compliance with the requisitions of the Law, on the part of school visitors or overseers.

Their first business should be to ascertain what these requisitions are—and in this there is no difficulty. A copy of the Law has been forwarded, and can be found in every school district in the State, and its provisions in this respect as laid down in the old law, and modified by the act of 1839, are clear, comprehensive and all important. We will allude to some of the most important.

They can "prescribe rules and regulations for the management, studies, books and discipline" of all the common schools in the society. This power in reference to books should be exercised this winter. The interest of scholar, parent and teacher require that the distracting, and expensive variety of books now in use in the same school should be done away with. In most cases, parents will readily acquiesce in any arrangement, provided it is made after due reflection, by men in whose judgment they have confidence, and is likely to be permanent. If a selection can be made by the visitors, and adopted by the society, it would be the most advisable course. Even though so decisive a step as this is not taken, the visitors should recommend a list of text books, and insist upon their introduction, whenever new books are to be bought. No one can complain of this as a hardship. They should also take steps to have a supply of the best books at the wholesale prices at hand. This alone would secure their introduction in most cases. Teachers should not be allowed to introduce a single new book into the school, without permission, for that will in nine cases out of ten, lead to the purchase of others of the same kind. Let but a single copy of a book once get into a school, and it will soon swell the ruinous variety before prevailing.

Before leaving this head, we will observe, that they may prescribe such regulations as will secure the regular and punctual attendance of teachers and pupils. They may require that the teacher shall open his school at the appointed hour—shall mark all who are not present

at that time as tardy,—shall keep a register,\* not only of attendance, but also of good behavior, and recitations, and above all, send home a weekly or monthly report of the result in the case of each child, to his or her parent or guardian. They may provide for the health and progress of the pupils, by requiring of the teacher to see that his school room is ventilated, not by the admission of cold air in the lower part of the room, for time, decay and the district, will probably have made ample provision for that—but by allowing the hot and foul air to escape, if possible, from the top of the room. Once at least every hour of a school session, the foul air should be expelled—if in no other way by opening windows and door. They may secure some degree of moral instruction requiring that the Bible, and especially the Testament, should be read every day, either by the teacher, or by the best readers in the school, or as a regular class book, by the older children at least. They may promote the proper discipline of the school, by forbidding undue severity, or a resort to unusual punishments. Even though no rules are written out, these and other suggestions can be made to the teachers by the experienced members of the Board, and in nine cases out of ten, the teachers will do their best to carry them out. They are generally willing to take council from those who are made by the Law, and chosen by parents, to be the official guardians of the school.

But a second most important trust reposed in school visitors or overseers, and which yields to none other in the whole scale of public duty, if measured by its influence on the present and the future, and as touching every conceivable interest of society—is that of *examining, commissioning, and removing* school teachers. We will not at this time comment at any length on this topic. Most of the teachers of the winter schools, before this number is published, will have been examined by the Board of visitors or a committee of its Board, and received a certificate of qualification in respect to their moral character, and their knowledge of the studies prescribed by the Law. Otherwise they enter the school in violation of a plain provision of the statute, and if they receive any portion of the public money, they must receive it by another violation of law on the part of him who pays it.—The Law has done all that it can to provide against the introduction of an immoral or an unqualified teacher into the common schools. It has constituted certain officers to see that its provisions are complied with, in this respect—and upon the conscientious action of these committees, does the success or failure of the school system mainly depend.

But with all their faithfulness, an improper teacher may gain access to the school room, and if so, they are authorized "to displace such as they may find deficient in any requisite qualification, or who will not conform to the regulations by them adopted." This is a delicate trust; but the manners, morals and mental habits of the children, their usefulness in life and happiness in two worlds, requires that it should be discharged with prudence and firmness.

A third important requisition of the Law is, that the visitors "shall visit the schools *twice* during each season of schooling." Frequent, faithful, intelligent visitation is the soul of the school, bringing along with it, encouragement to teacher and pupil for past success, and a check and rebuke upon unwise discipline and methods of study.

Under the Law as it now stands, the schools must be visited by the *whole board*, or any portion of the same not less than *two, twice* at

\* To secure some uniformity in the mode of keeping the Register required by Law, we have drawn up a form, a specimen of which will be sent to the clerk of each school society, with the Blanks for the school Return for 1839-40. Unless a better mode should suggest itself to teachers and district committees, a blank book can be ruled after this specimen—or committees can furnish themselves with a book, for two seasons, on application to Case, Tiffany & Co., who at our suggestion have printed and bound it up in this form. The same publishers have on hand the form of a weekly Report, used in the schools of Hartford and vicinity.

east during each season of schooling; or the Board may appoint a committee of two persons, (and these should be the most suitable in the society, and need not be members of the board,) one or both of whom may visit all of the district schools once in two weeks of the opening, and again within two weeks of the close of each school.—Now this last provision was not made to supersede altogether the action of the entire board, but simply to enable the board to act with more vigor, regularity, and success.

We would suggest the following course of proceeding, in reference to the visitation of the schools, and the direction and oversight of teachers, and "the general instruction of the scholars." Let the board hold *stated meetings* as frequently as may be, and at least once a month. Let teachers be invited to be present. Let every thing that relates to the present condition of the schools, methods of teaching, studies pursued, books used, motives appealed to, punishments inflicted, &c. &c., be made the topics of familiar conversation or of more formal, and even written discussion. Let teachers state their difficulties, and remedies be suggested, and especially the best ways to enlist the co-operation of parents be presented,—whatever may be done, let there be stated meetings of school visitors, and let it be known that such meetings are held.

Let the several schools be assigned to one or more members of the board, as under their especial charge, and let the teachers of such schools be committed to the particular kindness, attention and oversight of such sub-committees. It should be required of such committees to visit the school or schools in their circuit once a month, and to report its condition to the board at their stated meeting. In addition to this, the board should avail themselves of the provision of the late act concerning schools, and appoint a committee of two persons, one or both of whom should be the best qualified in the society, whether on the board or not, and should visit all the schools within the time specified. This committee will thus be able to compare their relative condition and progress, and from their own personal examination, and the knowledge and reflection of the whole board, be able to make out such returns, and report as the law, and the true interest of parents, district, societies and the State.

There is another important requisition of the law. Visitors "must lodge with the clerk of the society a written report of their own doings, and of the condition of several schools within their limits, for the preceding seasons of schooling, with such observations as their experience and observation may suggest." Such a report, especially if it is understood by teachers, scholars and parents, that it will be full and faithful, will secure faithfulness on the part of all entrusted with the concerns of the schools, will enable parents to know the condition of each, and furnish the means of sound judgment and action, in reference to future instruction.

There is another duty which the visitors owe to the State, with a view of enabling the Legislature and the people to know to what end the avails of near three millions of money are expended on the schools—to what extent the universal education of all the children of the State is secured. They "must lodge with the clerk, such returns of the condition of each common school within their limits, in such particulars and at such times as the Board of Commissioners may require."—These returns are the source from which the Board must derive no inconsiderable portion of that information, which will enable them to submit a report to the Legislature, "as to the condition of each common school in the State, and the best plans for their improvement and better organization."

The blanks for their returns will be forwarded to the clerk of each society, with a copy of this number of the Journal. We would earnestly solicit complete returns, according to the form prescribed. There are several school societies in the State, in which this requisition of the law has been uniformly neglected, and yet certificates have been forwarded to the Comptroller of public accounts, that the schools have been kept in all respects according to law.

The suggestions we have thus far made, are connected with a faithful compliance with the letter of the law. But it would be a new era in education in our midst, if school visitors would feel themselves called upon to do something more than this.

Teachers should be invited, encouraged and assisted to associate to-

gether, for mutual improvement. The principle of association, the sympathy, the impulse, the enjoyment given and received by persons in the pursuit of a common object, should not be lost in this work of education. The attainments of solitary reading, should be quickened by the action of living mind. The acquisitions of experience in the school room, should be tested by the experience, the approbation, or the strictures of others. New advances in any direction, should become known and made the common property of the profession. New hints should be taken up and followed out by trial and investigation; old and defective methods when held up and exposed, should be abandoned, and better, adopted. These meetings need not be formal or uninteresting. The sympathies of a common pursuit, the interchange of ideas, the mutual benefit of each others experience, the discussion of topics which concern their common advancement, could not but be interesting, and increase their self-respect. The community will thus feel the importance of their profession in its aggregate strength, and accord to it a higher social and pecuniary consideration. These conferences of teachers are encouraged in Prussia, Holland and France, directly by those concerned in the administration of their several systems of public instruction. They have been an important instrumentality in improving their systems. In our own country, they have been followed with marked good results. In our own State we could name instances, where improved methods of instruction were in the course of a single winter, transferred from one district, to nearly all the districts in the society, simply from the interchange of views, effected by their conferences.

Teachers should be authorized and encouraged to visit each others school, and in this way, witness other methods of discipline and instruction, than their own. The best knowledge and most worthy practice, would then become common property. Teachers no more than other persons, will continue long in practices, which their own observation convinces them are not as good and profitable, as those pursued by others in their own neighborhood, and which others can see as well as themselves, and compare and contrast with their own. A half day spent once a week, or once a month, in a better school than their own, will be a gain not to be estimated in days or weeks, to the scholars of their own school.

Teachers should be assisted in the purchase, or at least to the perusal of the best books on education, and especially those that relate to the government of a school, and the best methods of communicating knowledge. It is to be sure a discouraging circumstance in the present condition of the profession, that so few teachers are willing to make any present pecuniary sacrifice to gain that information which the study and experience of others have bequeathed for their benefit. We say present sacrifice, for if it is a sacrifice, it is only for the present, and will be returned to them a hundred fold, in their own self respect, and the increased respect and compensation which their more profitable services will command.

A few dollars, say five, will purchase ABBOTT'S TEACHER, DUNN'S MANUAL, TAYLOR'S DISTRICT SCHOOL, CONFESSIONS OF A SCHOOL-MASTER, HOW SHALL I GOVERN MY SCHOOL? DWIGHT'S SCHOOL-MASTER'S FRIEND, and some of the JOURNALS\* devoted exclusively to common school education. These books could be purchased and read in succession by all the teachers of a society in a single winter.† Cannot this small pittance, small compared with the great good it will purchase, be raised, and that, immediately?

We have pursued these topics quite as far as we intended, and will conclude with one more suggestion. The results of this educational labor should not only be embodied in the form of the required Returns and Reports, and the manifest improvement of each school, but before the close of the winter, all of the schools should be brought together—and by combining the services and performances customary in an exhibition, examination and an innocent and rational public meeting or festival, make an interesting and profitable occasion of it to

\* As far as we know, we cannot number fifty subscribers out of the eighteen or nineteen hundred common school teachers in the state. Of this we do not complain—we state it as a discouraging fact in the present condition of the profession.

† All these, and several others, such as Peers' American Education, District School as it Was, Cousin's Prussian System, &c., were purchased by a member of the Board of School Visitors, in Bethlem, and by him loaned, for a mere trifle, to the teachers. It is an excellent example.



children, teachers and parents. We will, however, in some future No. enlarge on this suggestion.

In the mean time, let us all labor on with the full understanding, that in this work we cannot expect the usual indications of usefulness, and success. "Eternity alone can disclose the extent of good which may have been effected, or the amount of evil that may have been prevented through the agency of a single school made better by our exertions. We must seek for our reward in the contemplation of the ever extending result of educational labor, in two worlds, and thus be content each to dig his small allotment in this great field of usefulness, to contribute his little item to the cause of truth, and to look for the sum total as the product of innumerable contributions, each of them as meritorious, and all of them far more important, and splendid than his own."

#### CO-OPERATION OF PARENTS IN IMPROVING COMMON SCHOOLS.—CONTINUED.

The importance of inviting the teachers to visit at the homes of the pupils was considered in the last number. Have any of the parents who read the remarks then offered made trial of this course? Is the want of time plead as an excuse for not doing it? Think on how many less important objects abundance of time and attention are bestowed. Delay no longer. Make the trial, and the happy results will soon shew themselves.

But a kindred effort of equal importance must also be made. *The schools should be frequently visited by the parents and guardians of the scholars.* Long visits are not necessary. If you cannot spend an hour, you can surely stay half that length of time, and do this once a month, which would be less than two days a year. Suppose it should be three or four days, what would this amount of time be, compared with the object to which it would be devoted, and the good to be attained. If all the parents, both fathers and mothers, and other adult members of the family, and friends of education would do this, it would give a new impulse to the exertions of the teachers, and the application of the scholars. It is natural for us all to be cheered and encouraged in our various pursuits when we find that the intelligent, the virtuous, and the influential take an interest in them, and approve our well meant endeavors to do our duty, and sympathize with our success in performing it.

This principle of human nature is susceptible of being called into lively exercise in the case of the teachers of our schools. A judicious remark of approbation from a parent or friend of the scholars in the school room, in the presence of those whose attachment and respect are so important to the successful discharge of the teacher's duties, would tend greatly to sustain him in his arduous trust, and to make him feel that he has not to stand alone in meeting its responsibilities. His improvements in the modes of instruction, his talent for commanding the attention of the scholars, and his wise and efficacious plans of discipline, being appreciated by others whose opinions he esteems, and whose countenance he feels that he needs, he will be the more confirmed in all that is excellent in his operations, and be ready to receive suggestions for the amendment of his deficiencies or errors.

But, on the other hand, if he perceives that his school, how much so ever labor he may bestow upon it, or whatever degree of success may attend his efforts, is neglected by the whole community around him, and he left to "plod his weary way," alone, without sympathy, approbation, and support, unless he is endowed with a strong and ever-active sense of duty, or great force of character in some other way, he must become discouraged and grow remiss in his exertions. He will soon

be found, if any one should happen to look in upon him, to have come to the conclusion to *get along tolerably well*, earn his pittance of wages, and be contented with escaping downright censure and reproach. How many teachers of our schools are in this precise condition, and how many parents and guardians of youth have contributed, by their utter neglect in visiting their schools, to place them in it. T. H. G.

#### THE HOUSE I LIVE IN.

By Dr. Wm. A. Alcott.

##### No. 2. HOW THE HOUSE IS BUILT.

In my first number, I endeavored to show you what wonderful provision the Great Builder of the human frame has made for the growth and reparation of that frame. I spoke of the machinery and the processes by which food is masticated, insalivated, made into chyme, then into chyle, and lastly into blood. But when I came to speak of the blood, I found it difficult to say much which I thought would be intelligible, because I had not yet made you acquainted with the lungs, and the work they perform. Those who have read my little school book called "The House I live in," are not indeed wholly ignorant on this subject; but although seven or eight editions of that work have already been sold, I doubt whether it has been seen much in Connecticut. My present purpose, I say then, is to describe the lungs, as well as I can without engravings; and to tell you what purpose they are designed by the great Architect of the human frame to accomplish.

Many of the smaller animals which God has created, have no lungs. They seem to obtain those benefits from the air which others obtain by their lungs, by breathing it, as it were, through little openings, called pores, all over the surface of their bodies. I do not mean to say that they actually breathe through these pores, but only that something is done to the blood or other fluids, in the bodies of these little animals, by means of the air with which these pores come in contact, which answers the same, or nearly the same purpose to them, as breathing does to those which have lungs.

As we rise in the scale of being, from these inferior to nobler animals, we begin to find lungs. Even the fishes have something not unlike them. Their gills serve them the important purpose which our lungs serve us. But birds and quadrupeds have lungs like our own; only in many of them, they are not so large in proportion to the whole size of the animal as ours are.

Do fishes then breathe air? some reader will interpose, here, to say. Yes, they *use* air, if it is not quite correct to say they breathe it. They could not live long without it, any more than you or I can. It is as necessary to purify their blood, as it is to purify ours. Do you still ask how they can get air, when they live under water? All water which is not motionless or stagnant, contains more or less of air, and the gills of fishes enable them to appropriate it to their use. Thus, when a river or pond has been long imprisoned by ice, and a hole is cut, the fish will immediately crowd around it, and may easily be taken. They crowd around it for the sake—at least in part—of the fresh air; the air in the water before it was frozen having been in a measure exhausted, or as we should say, *used up*.

It is man, however, and a few of the larger and more perfect quadrupeds, and the birds, in whom we see the finest lungs; and in whom the blood is least changed on the surface of the body. For as we ascend from worms up to man, the higher we go, and the larger and more perfect the lungs, and the less the necessity of *breathing on the surface of the body*, the more imperfect is the arrangement and structure of the skin for that purpose. And yet even man, perfect as his lungs are, breathes by means of his skin, in a small degree; that is, to say, has his blood in some degree changed by the action of the air on its pores; or by the contact, as might more properly be said, of the pores of the skin with the surrounding air.

But how are the lungs situated, what is their structure, and what their manner of action? These questions it is now my purpose to answer.

The lungs, or as we commonly call them, the *lights*, are situated in the upper part of the body, next to the neck. They are enclosed, almost wholly, in a bony cavity, called the chest

the fore part of which is called the breast, and sometimes, but improperly, the stomach. Indeed there are many people who refer some of their unpleasant sensations—as the tenderness of the lungs, when they are inflamed by a cold—to the stomach. "My stomach is very sore," I have heard many a person say, when his stomach was well enough, and it was lungs which were "sore." Again, I have heard people talk about phlegm in their stomachs, and a coldness of their stomachs, and a pain in their stomachs, when the coldness, and phlegm, and pain, were all in the lungs, and not in the stomach. The latter lies below the lungs, and indeed quite below the ribs, towards the left side of the middle of the body.

I have said that the lungs were the parts just below the neck, enclosed in the chest. The sides of the chest, the cavity which encloses the lungs, are made up of the ribs, and strong fleshy bands which interlace between them. The ribs, in fact, at the top of the chest, go almost round it; for they have nothing between them, at the fore part, but a flat bone, called the breast bone, or sternum, to the sides of which they are joined, as by a sort of cement; and nothing between them at the hinder part but the backbone, to which they are fastened by a sort of joint.

The shape of the chest, when it is shaped as it should be, is not unlike that of a sugar loaf, only it is flattened a little at the fore part and back part. It is broader or longer toward the bottom, and smaller or narrower toward the top. Or rather, its shape is that of a sugar loaf enclosed by bands or hoops.

The soft parts of the neck, such as the windpipe, the swallow pipe, and some of the great blood vessels, fill up the space which would otherwise be left open at the top of this sugar-loaf shaped cavity; and the bottom, or floor of this cavity, is formed by a thick film or membrane, called the diaphragm, or in popular language, the midriff. This midriff separates the lungs and the heart—for the heart lies as it were between the two principal divisions of the lungs—from the stomach, and liver, and intestines, which lie below, forming a natural and very necessary division between them.

The lungs themselves, as almost every body knows, are of a very light reddish color, and hang somewhat loose and pendulous in the chest. They are in two great divisions—a right and a left division—with a membranous partition between them, and with the heart also between them, toward the bottom of the cavity. The right division of the lungs is usually considerably larger than the left. Both are subdivided into what are called lobes; the right division into three, the left into two. These organs, thus constructed and situated, are made firm on the outside, but hollow, or rather cellular—that is, full of little cells—within. When we breathe, the air descends into them through what we call the wind-pipe; a large strong tube, lying in the fore part of the throat. When this tube reaches the top of the lungs themselves, it divides into two; one of which goes to the right division of the lungs, and the other to the left. Here again is a subdivision into smaller tubes, one of which goes to each of the lobes of the lungs; and connected with each smaller division are innumerable little cells.

When we breathe, as I have already said,—that is, when we *inhale*, or draw in our breath,—the air rushes into the lungs, and goes into all the little cells of which I have spoken, and swells them more or less, as it would a bellows. As they thus expand, the thick membrane below them, in which they lie—the diaphragm, I mean—yields and bends, or sinks downward, pressing upon the stomach, and liver, and intestines, so much as to throw them a little outward. This causes that alternate heaving or swelling, and sinking or falling, of the body, which every one must have observed. But there are limits to this motion, for the body cannot expand very far; so that when we inhale a full breath, there must be motion, and consequent expansion or swelling somewhere else. This consists in the expansion or swelling of the chest itself.

But can the strong bony chest itself enlarge by the mere pressure of air from within? you may perhaps ask. It certainly does so, when there is nothing in the way. The attachment of the ribs to the backbone behind, and to the breastbone before, is of such a nature, that when we breathe a full breath, the ribs are naturally carried outward and upward, and the breastbone forward, in such a manner as to increase the space within very considerably. This may be seen by looking at the outside of the chest, when a person is breathing;

especially a person loosely dressed, or in the use of considerable exercise. How this part of the body heaves and swells, in every direction, except towards the back, when we have been running.

The more the chest enlarges or expands, when we breathe the better, provided it does not cost us too much violence of exercise, I will endeavor to show why.

The use of respiration or breathing, is to form new blood and to reform the old. In my first number, I have told you something of the manner in which new blood is formed from our food. It only remains, therefore, for me to tell you how the old blood, worn out and spoiled as it is after it has been in the system a little while, can be made into new.

No 2 completed in the next.

## NORMAL SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS SEMINARIES.

BY CALVIN E. STOWE, D. D.

### VI. Course of instruction in the Teacher's Seminary.

1. A thorough, scientific, and demonstrative study of all the branches to be taught in the common schools, with directions, at every step, as to the best method of inculcating each lesson on children of different dispositions and capacities, and various intellectual habits.

It is necessary here to give a general outline of a course of study for the common schools of this country. The pupils usually in attendance are between the ages of six and sixteen, and I would arrange them in three divisions, as follows:

FIRST DIVISION, including the youngest children, and those least advanced, generally between the ages of six and nine.

#### Topics of Instruction.

1. Familiar conversational teaching, in respect to objects which fall daily under their notice, and in respect to their moral and social duties, designed to awaken their powers of observation and expression, and to cultivate their moral feelings.
2. Elements of reading.
3. Elements of writing.
4. Elements of numbers.
5. Exercises of the voice and ear—singing by rote.
6. Select readings in the Pentateuch, Psalms, and Gospels.

SECOND DIVISION, including those more advanced, and generally between the ages of nine and twelve.

#### Topics of Instruction.

1. Exercises in reading.
2. Exercises in writing.
3. Arithmetic.
4. Elements of geography, and Geography of the United States.
5. History of the United States.
6. Moral and religious instruction in select Bible narratives, parables, and proverbs.
7. Elements of music, and singing by note.
8. English Grammar and parsing.

THIRD DIVISION, most advanced, and generally between the ages of twelve and sixteen.

#### Topics of Instruction.

1. Exercises in reading and elocution.
2. Calligraphy, stenography, and linear drawing.
3. Algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, with their application to civil engineering, surveying, &c.
4. English composition, forms of business, and book-keeping.
5. General geography, or knowledge of the earth and of mankind.
6. General history.
7. Constitution of the United States, and of the several States.
8. Elements of the natural sciences, including their application to the arts of life, such as agriculture, manufactures, &c.
9. Moral instruction in the connected Bible history, the life and discourses of Christ, the religious observation of Nature, and history of Christianity.
10. Science and art of vocal and instrumental music.

Thorough instruction on all these topics I suppose to be essential to a complete common-school education; and though it may be many years before our schools come up to this standard, yet I think nothing short of this should satisfy us; and as fast as possible we should be laboring to train teachers capable of giving instruction to all these branches. When this standard for the common school has been attained, then, before the pupil is prepared to enter on the three years' course of study proposed in the Teachers' Seminary, he must have studied all the topics above enumerated, as they ought to be studied in the common schools.

The study of a topic, however, for the purpose of applying it to practical use, is not always the same thing as studying it for the purpose of teaching it. The processes are often quite different. A



man may study music till he can perform admirably himself, and yet possess very little skill in teaching others; and it is well known that the most successful orators are not unfrequently the very worst teachers of elocution. The process of learning for practical purposes, is mostly that of combination or synthesis; but the process of learning for the purpose of teaching, is one of continued and minute analysis, not only of the subject itself, but of all the movements and turnings of the *feelers* of the mind, the little *antennae* by which it seizes and retains its hold of the several parts of a topic. Till a man can minutely dissect, not only the subject itself, but also the intellectual machinery by which it is worked up, he cannot be very successful as a teacher. The orator analyzes his subject, and disposes its several parts in the order best calculated for effect; but the mental processes by which he does this, which constitute the tact that enables him to judge right, as if by instinct, are generally so rapid, so evanescent, that it may be impossible for him to recall them so as to describe them to another; and it is this very rapidity of intellectual movement, which gives him success as an orator, that renders it the more difficult for him to succeed as a teacher. The musician would perform very poorly, who should stop to recognize each volition that moves the muscles which regulate the movement of his fingers on the organ-keys; but he who would teach others to perform gracefully and rapidly, must give attention to points minute as these. The teacher must stop to observe and analyze each movement of the mind itself, as it advances on every topic; but men of genius for execution, and of great practical skill, who never teach, are generally too impatient to make this minute analysis, and often, indeed, form such habits as at length to become incapable of it. The first Duke of Marlborough was one of the most profound and brilliant military men that every lived; but he had been so little accustomed to observe the process of his own mind, by which he arrived with such certainty at those astounding results of warlike genius which have given him the first rank among Britain's soldiers, that he could seldom construct a connected argument in favor of his plans, and generally had but one answer to all the objections which might be urged against them, and that was usually repeated in the same words,—"Silly, silly, that's silly." A like remark is applicable to Oliver Cromwell, and several other men distinguished for prompt and energetic action. The mental habits best adapted for effect in the actual business of life, are not always the mental habits best suited to the teacher; and the Teachers' Seminary requires a mode of instruction in some respects different from the practical school.

The teacher also must review the branches of instruction above enumerated with reference to their scientific connexions, and a thorough demonstration of them, which, though not always necessary in respect to their practical application to the actual business of life, is absolutely essential to that ready command which a teacher must have over them in order to put them into the minds of others.

Nor is this all. There is a great variety of methods for inculcating the same truth; and the diversities of mind are quite as numerous as the varieties of method. One mind can be best approached by one method, and other mind by another; and in respect to the teacher, one of the richest treasures of experience is a knowledge of the adaptation of the different methods to different minds. These rich treasures of experience can be preserved, and classified, and imparted in the Teachers' Seminary. If the Teacher never studies his profession, he learns this part of his duties only by the slow and wasteful process of experimenting on mind, and thus, in all probability, ruins many before he learns how to deal with them. Could we ascertain how many minds have been lost to the world in consequence of the injudicious measures of inexperienced and incompetent teachers, if we could exhibit, in a statistical table, the number of souls which must be used up in qualifying a teacher for his profession, by intrusting him with its active duties without previous study, we could prove incontrovertibly that it is great want of economy, that it is a most prodigious waste, to attempt to carry on a system of schools without making provision for the education of teachers.

#### "THOUGHTS ON EDUCATION."

Under the above head, Dr. Humphrey, President of Amherst College, is communicating a series of excellent articles to the New York Observer. We have on a former occasion made some extracts from the earlier numbers of the series.—We shall here enrich our columns with some of his thoughts on "Common Schools." Dr. Humphrey's opinions on all subjects, are entitled to much weight, but on this, no one can question his competency to make valuable suggestions. He is a son of Connecticut, and Connecticut may be proud of him. He received his early education in her Common

Schools. He has "kept" these Common Schools in just such school-houses as he speaks of below, and has encountered all the difficulties which he proposes to have removed. He has made Education a business—and as a child, scholar, father, and teacher in the Common School, the pulpit and the college, he has set forth such a worthy practice, as to show that he has had just views and come to just results.

After bestowing deserved commendation on the "Common District School System of New England," because it is republican in principle and in operation; because it plants down its school-houses within convenient distances, all over the face of the land; that it brings children of all classes together upon one common level; and that it provides instruction for those who are in the most indigent circumstances, as well as for their rich and thriving neighbors—he remarks, that this system, like any other piece of machinery, must be moved by adequate power—and this power is the co-operation of the people with the government.

#### OUTLINE OF A PROSPEROUS COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM.

In order to reap the highest advantages from our admirable system, there must be a sufficient number of *school-houses*, pleasantly and healthfully located—well built, warmed and ventilated—admitting enough, but not too much light; and comfortably fitted up with seats, writing desks, and such other conveniences as will rather attract than repel both teachers and scholars.

There must be competent and faithful *instructors*—male and female—'apt to teach,' fond of the employment, skilled in government, patient, conscientious and laborious: instructors who will be always at their posts, working month in and month out, for the pleasure of it, as well as for the wages, and delighting in nothing so much, as the intellectual and moral improvement of their pupils.

The children, likewise, must be sent steadily to school—must be furnished with suitable reading and spelling books; with slates, pencils, writing apparatus, maps, geographies, arithmetics, dictionaries, and whatever else is necessary to aid and encourage them in these studies.

To pay the teachers and defray other necessary expenses, moneys must be raised either upon the scholar, or by assessments upon the property of the town or district, or from such permanent funds as may be provided by individual liberality or legislative appropriations.

School committees, selected from the most intelligent and best educated class of men in the respective school societies and districts, must be appointed to hire and examine teachers; to select and recommend books; to visit the schools, and to aid the instructors with their best influence and advice.

And finally, the great mass of the people must move together or the end will never be accomplished. Parents of all classes, must be warmly enlisted in the improvement of their children and the prosperity of the schools. Without their hearty co-operation, whatever else you may do, the primary schools will languish and ultimately, run down. The families of a village or neighborhood are not mere inert masses of matter, to be moulded and fashioned according to your pleasure, like so many potter's vessels; but living, thinking beings, to be swayed by motives, and to co-operate with you in your efforts to do them good.

This is a hasty outline of what I take to be essential to the highest prosperity of our common schools. But the great importance of the subject seems to require considerable enlargement, for which I must crave the reader's indulgence.

#### SCHOOL-HOUSES.

Are they where and what they ought to be? A great deal has been written on this subject, within a few years past, and there is, in some places, a manifest improvement in school-house architecture; but I suspect that even now, some thousands of school-houses might be pointed out, within the bounds of New-England and New-York, to go no further, which are anything but neat, pleasant and convenient. I might call them *juvenile prisons*, if they were not so slightly built, and kept in such miserable repair. But whatever they may be like, let us go and visit one of them. There it stands, on a burning sand

bank, or upon the margin of a dead swamp, because the place is *twenty-five rods and a half* nearer the centre of the district, than the fine verdant lawn upon which some of the proprietors were anxious to have it built. Every thing around is desolation and forbidding. The school has opened for the winter, and the glazier is coming *next week* to mend the windows: which however seems to be a needless expense, as by careful use, the boys' hats, which now supply the place of *seen by nine*, will last till spring. A little wood there is, piled up under the snow; but it is as green as a Norwegian pine, and if it were dry, there is no *sign* of a wood-house to shelter it from the weather. This looks dreary enough, in a sharp winter morning, but let us go in; perhaps we shall find things better than we expected. Not at all. See how small the room is, how low the ceiling, how badly constructed the stove, or fire-place, how high and rickety the slab frames, how closely huddled together the smaller scholars, half roasted on one side and half frozen on the other; how awkwardly and miserably fitted up the writing desks, how snow-blinding the light, for want of curtains to exclude or soften it; how—but why should I go any further? If you wish to remain longer, I have no earthly objection, provided you will release me from this carbonic and sporic confinement.

Now I am aware, that this may be put down as an extravagant ebullition, by some of your readers; but if any one can prove to me that there is a grain of caricature in the picture, I will reward him handsomely for his trouble. At any rate, when I had the honor, in successive winters, to exercise some of the youthful regiments of H— and L— counties, in common school tactics, it was nothing strange to have the necessary repairs put off till the last moment before the opening of the school—nay, to have the mason come in with his trowel, and the glazier with his putty, or bits of tin, in the midst of our spelling and reading; to see a hardy yeoman drive up, with the first load of *green wood*, or of what he had picked up on his farm in the last stages of decay, to make room for more to fall down and rot, against the next season; to go sometimes to the school-house in the coldest weather, and not find a handful of *re*, or a stick to make it of; to wait and shiver and rub the icy fingers of the smaller children, till the larger boys could go and borrow an axe, and dig out and cut an armful, and thaw off the ice, or as the case might be, finding no wood to disinter, to dismiss the school till some body could be put up to bring on his load.

All this and more I have seen and experienced myself; and in districts too, which prided themselves in being rather in the fore-ground, than behind the times. That, however, was a great while ago; and school-houses, perhaps, may be better now; wood may be better, and there may be more of it. But how much better? If any body will agree to pay me a generous premium for every school-house I can find answering to the above description, I will make a short excursion during the next vacation; and in case of failure, I will 'own beat,' and bear my own expenses.

It is certain, at any rate, that our school-houses in the country are for the most part fitted up with less regard to health, convenience, and attractiveness, than any other class of buildings. While every man of good judgment, in building his own house, spends a great deal of time and thought in planning other conveniences, he has regard also to the health and comfort of his children in the size and arrangement of their sleeping rooms. The reflection that it will cost him a few dollars more, to give them good than poor accommodations, weighs very little with such a father. "What is property good for," he asks, "if it is not to make ourselves and our families comfortable? My children will never thank me for thrusting them into some bye corner, in their tender years, for the sake of leaving them a little more to spend after I am gone."

Nor is the care of our men of thrift and enterprise confined to their children. It extends to all their domestic animals.—The farmer will not only invite you to look at the good condition of his cattle and horses, but will show you what pains and expense he has been at in the fitting up of sheds, racks and stables. The swine, even, proverbially bristling and *contrary*, though they be, must have spacious accommodations and warm beds, as a matter of taste and economy. But when these same indulgent fathers and thrifty husbandmen come to the matter of their children's education, they "guess" the old

school-house will do another year. It will want a few shingles and some other patching, to be sure, but then it looks about as well as it did ten years ago, when every body was satisfied. Besides, the times are hard, and they have just been laying out so much money in building, or buying land, that they have nothing to spare. Some dissent and remonstrate; but this is the voice of the majority, and it prevails.

Thus the children of the district, (from thirty to seventy or eighty in number,) are compelled to take up with accommodations, in pursuing their studies through the long and cold winter, which no one would think tolerable any where but in the common school—the place of all others, I was going to say, which should be made neat, roomy, warm, and in all respects attractive. There must be *new* stables and *new* plans and experiments to fatten the full-blooded *Berkshires*, but the *old* dilapidated school-house, is almost too good to be pulled down at present.

Nay more; I am not afraid to hazard the prediction, that as the schools open this very season, many a master will find that the repairs are not completed when he is ready to begin. The stove is not up, or the glass is not set, or the benches are not mended, or the wood is so green and wet that you might as well undertake to burn salamanders: and that many a teacher, will also, in the course of the winter, be literally frozen out, for two or three days at a time, through the neglect of those, to whom he is obliged to look for the necessary supplies of fuel. Now if I am not entirely mistaken in these impressions, is it any wonder that the children in so many of our common schools do not make half the proficiency which might, under better advantages, be reasonably expected? How can they do much, when they have to burn off the ice before they can get at the wood, and it takes half the forenoon to warm a space ten feet square, nearest to the fire, and the ink freezes in their pens, and their feet ache with the cold, and every thing in short, is so cheerless and forbidding?

I do not think myself competent, if I had time, to propose the best model for common district school-houses: and easy as the task may seem, I suspect that but very few professed builders have studied this simple branch of architecture with very much interest or success. Perhaps the reason is, that it has hitherto been regarded as of little importance. But really, I do not know how a man of ingenuity and practical good sense, could render himself more useful in very considerable sections of the country, than by turning his attention to the subject, inducing the friends of common schools to build upon such improved plans as would commend themselves at once to every eye. In this way a great and most beneficial change might soon be effected—for I will not believe that the majority of parents anywhere, would rest contented with such unsightly and ill-contrived school-houses as are now common, even in many parts of New England, if there were better models which they could be invited to examine.

I will only, in conclusion, throw out some half dozen *negatives*, leaving the *positives* in more skilful hands. 1. A school-house, then, ought never to be planted down in an unhealthy or an unpleasant location. 2. It ought never to be without a spacious woodhouse, and dry seasoned wood or coal. 3. It ought not to be warmed by a *close* stove. The oxygen and hydrogen are both wanted for respiration. 4. It ought not to have high benches without backs for the martyrdom of abecedarians, whose feet cannot reach the floors by ten or twelve good inches; and, 5. The writing desks ought not to be so constructed, as to disturb the whole school, whenever the scholars open and shut them.

#### MONKEYS.

From the following paragraph it will be seen that monkeys are quite as improvident as men, and inflict the same evil on their offspring, by their badly ventilated nurseries and school rooms.

Tubercles on the lungs, which are the ripe fruit of consumption, may be formed in any other animal as well as in man. Cows, confined in close barns, in the midst of cities, and deprived of all change of air, will have tubercles on the lungs, and die of consumption. Physiologists have tried the experiment on monkeys, which, after being kept for some time on impure air, become consumptive and die, exhibiting every symptom of that fatal disease.



But what will astonish most, although it is an incontestable fact in natural history, and can be proved by thousands of witnesses, is, that monkeys themselves, in their native country, often unite together, and construct a sort of tenement, where they confine the young of the whole flock, which tenements are so secluded from all access of pure air, that consumption in the young brood is the inevitable consequence, and great numbers of them perish, from generation to generation, of that disorder.

ERRATA. In the last paragraph, for "monkeys," read "men," and for "tenement," read "schoolhouse."

Mass. Com. School Journal.

## DISTRICT SCHOOL AS IT WAS, BY ONE WHO WENT TO IT.

HOW THEY USED TO READ IN THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE IN DISTRICT NO. 5.

In this description of the District School as it was, that frequent and important exercise, reading, must not be omitted—reading as it was. Advance then ye readers of the Old School-house, and let us witness your performances.

We will suppose it the first day of the school. 'Come and read,' says the mistress to a little flaxen-headed creature of doubtful gender, for the child is in petticoats and sits on the female side as close as possible to a guardian sister. But then those coarser features, tanned complexion and close-clipped hair, with other minutiae of aspect, are somewhat contradictory to the feminine dress. 'Come and read.' It is the first time that this he-or-she was ever inside of a school-house and in the presence of a school ma'am according to recollection, and the order is heard with shrinking timidity. But the sister whispers an encouraging word and helps 'tot' down from the seat, who creeps out into the aisle and hesitates along down to the teacher biting his fingers, or scratching his head, perhaps both, to relieve the embarrassment of the novel situation. 'What is your name, dear?' 'Tholomon Icherthon,' lips the now discovered he, in a phlegm-choked voice scarce above a whisper. 'Put your hands down by your side Solomon and make a bow.' He obeys, if a short and hasty jerk of the head is a bow. The alphabetical page of the spelling-book is presented and he is asked, 'What's that?' but he cannot tell. He is but two years and a half old, and has been sent to school to relieve his mother from trouble rather than to learn. No one at home has yet shown or named a letter to him.—He has never had even that celebrated character, round O, pointed out to his notice. It was an older beginner, most probably, who being asked a similar question about the first letter of the alphabet, replied, 'I know him by sight, but can't call him by name.' But our namesake of the wise man, does not know the gentleman even by sight, nor any of his twenty-five companions.

Solomon Richardson has at length said A, B, C, for the first time in his life. He has read. 'That's a nice boy; make another bow and go to your seat.' He gives another jerk of the head and whirls on his heel and trots back to his seat, meeting the congratulatory smile of his sister with a satisfied grin, which, put into language would be, 'There, I've read, ha'n't I?'

The little chit, at first so timid and almost inaudible in enunciation, in a few days becomes accustomed to the place and the exercise; and in obedience to the 'speak up loud, that's a good boy,' he soon pipes off A-er, B-er, C-er, &c., with a far ringing shrillness, that vies even with Chanicleer himself. Solomon went all the pleasant days of the first summer, and nearly every day of the next, before he knew all his letters by sight or could call them by name. Strange that it should take so long to become acquainted with these twenty-six characters, when in a month's time the same child becomes familiar with the forms and the names of hundreds of objects in nature around, or in use about his father's house, shop or farm! Not so very strange neither, if we only reflect a moment. Take a child into a party of twenty-six persons, all strangers, and lead him from one to the other as fast as his little feet can patter, telling him their respective names, all in less than ten minutes; do this four times a day even, and you would not be surprised if he should be weeks at least, if not months, in learning to designate them all by their names. Is it any matter of surprise then that the child should be so long in becoming acquainted with the alphabetical party, when he is introduced to them precisely in the manner above described? Then these are not of different heights, complexions, dresses, motions, and tones of voice, as a living company have. But there they stand in an unalterable line, all in the same complexions and dress, all just so tall, just so motionless, and mute, and uninteresting, and of course the most unrememberable figures in the world. No wonder that some should go to school and 'sit on a bench and say A B C,' as a little girl said, for a whole year, and still find themselves strangers to some of the sable company even then. Our little

reader is permitted at length to turn a leaf, and he finds himself in the region of the A's—an expanse of little syllables making me, who am given to comparisons, think of an extensive plain whereon there is no tree, or shrub, or plant, or any thing else inviting to the eye, and nothing but little stones, stones, stones, all about the same size. And what must the poor little learner do here? Why, he must hop from cobble to cobble, if I may so call ab, eb, ib, &c., as fast as he possibly can, naming each one, after the voice of the teacher as he hurries along. And this must be kept up until he can denominate each lifeless and uninteresting object on the face of the desert.

After more or less months the weary novice ceases to be an Ab-ite. He is next put into whole words of one syllable, arranged in columns. The first word we read in Perry that conveyed any thing like an idea, was the first one in the first column. The word Ache—ay, we did not easily forget what this meant when once informed, the corresponding idea, or rather feeling, was so often in our consciousness. Ache—a very appropriate term with which to begin a course of education so abounding in pains of body and of mind.

After five pages of this perpendicular reading, if I may so call it, we entered on the horizontal, that is, on words arranged in sentences and paragraphs. This was reading in good earnest, as grown up folks did, and something with which tiny childhood would be very naturally puffed up. 'Easy Lessons' was the title of about a dozen separate chapters scattered at intervals among the numerous spelling columns, like brambly openings here and there amid the tall forest. Easy lessons, because they consisted mostly of little monosyllabic words easy to be pronounced. But they were not easy as it regards being understood. They were made up of abstract moral sentences presenting but a very faint meaning to the child, if any at all. Their particular application to his own conduct he would not perceive of course without help, and this it scarcely ever entered the head or the heart of the teacher to afford.

In the course of summers, how many I forget, we arrived at the most manly and dignified reading, the illustrious Perry had prepared for us. It was entitled Moral Tales and Fables. As for the Moral at the end, teachers never dreamed of attracting our attention to it. Indeed we had no other idea of all these Easy Lessons, Tales and Fables, than that they were to be syllabled from the tongue in the task of reading. That they were to sink into the heart and make us better in life, never occurred to our simple understandings.

Among all the rest were five pieces of poetry—charming stuff to read, the words would come along one after another so easily, and the lines would jingle so pleasantly together at the end, tickling the ear like two beads in a rattle. O give us poetry to read, of all things, we thought.

The principal requisites in reading in these days, were to read fast, mind the 'stops and marks,' and speak up loud. As for suiting the tone to the meaning, no such thing was dreamed of, in our school at least. As much emphasis was laid on an insignificant of, or and, as on the most important word in the piece. But no wonder we did not know how to vary our tones, for we did not always know the meaning of the words, or enter into the general spirit of the composition. This was very frequently, indeed almost always the case with the majority even of the first class. Parliamentary prose and Miltonic verse were just about as good as Greek for the purpose of modulating the voice according to meaning. It scarcely ever entered the heads of our teachers to question us about the ideas hidden in the great, long words and spacious sentences. It is possible that they did not always discover it themselves. 'Speak up there, and not read like a mouse in a cheese, and mind your stops,'—such were the principal directions respecting the important art of elocution. Important it was most certainly considered, for each class must read twice in the forenoon, and the same in the afternoon, from a quarter to a half an hour each time, according to the size of the class. Had they read but once or twice, and but little at a time, and this with nice and very profitable attention to tone and sense, parents would have thought the master most miserably deficient in duty, and their children cheated out of their rights, notwithstanding the time thus saved should be most assiduously devoted to other all-important branches of education.

### HOW THEY USED TO SPELL IN "the District School as it was."

There, the class have read; but they have something else to do before they take their seats. 'Shut your books,' says he who has been hearing them read. What makes this row of little countenances brighten up so suddenly, especially the upper end of it? What wooden faces and leaden eyes, two minutes ago! The reading was nothing to them—those select sentences and maxims in Perry's spelling-book which are tucked in between the fables. It is all as dull as a dirge to those life-loving boys and girls. They almost drowsed while they stood up in their places. But they are fully awake now. They are going to spell. But this in itself is the driest exercise to prepare for, and the driest to perform, of the whole round. The

child cares no more in his heart about the arrangement of vowels and consonants in the orthography of words, than he does how many chips lie one above another at the school-house wood-pile.—But he does care, whether he is at the head or foot of his class; whether the money dangles from his own neck or another's. This is the secret of the interest in spelling. Emulation is awakened, ambition roused. There is something like the tug of strength in the wrestle, something of the alternation of hope and fear in a game of chance. There has been a special preparation for the trial. Observe this class any day, half an hour before they are called up to read. What a flitting from top to bottom of the spelling column; and what a flutter of lips and hissing of utterance. Now the eye twinkles on the page to catch a word, and now it is fixed on the empty air while the orthography is syllabled over and over again in mind, until at length it is syllabled on the memory. But the time of trial has come; they have only to read first. 'The third class may come and read.' 'O dear, I haven't got my spelling lesson,' mutters Charlotte to herself. She has just begun the art of writing this winter, and she lingered a little too long at her hooks and trammels. The lesson seems to her to have as many again hard words in it as common. What a fluster she is in. She got up above George in the forenoon, and she would not get down again for any thing. She is as slow in coming from her seat as she possibly can be and keep moving. She makes a chink in her book with her finger, and every now and then during the reading exercise, steals a glance at a difficult word.

But the reading is over and what a brightening up, as was said before, with the exception perhaps of two or three idle or stupid boys at that less honorable extremity of the class called the foot. That boy at the head—no, it *was* a boy, but Harriet has at length got above him, and when girls once get to the head, get them away from it if you can. Once put the 'pride of place' into their hearts and how they will queen it. Then they are more sensitive, regarding any thing that might lower them in the eyes of others, and seem the least like disgrace. I have known a little girl to cry the half of one day, and look melancholly the whole of the next, on losing her place at the head. Girls are more likely to arrive at, and keep the first place in the class in consequence of a little more help from mother nature than boys get. I believe that they generally have a memory more fitted for catching and holding words and other signs addressed to the eye, than the other sex. That girl at the head has studied her spelling lesson until she is as confident of every word as the unerring Perry himself. She can spell every word in the column in the order it stands without the master's 'putting it out,' she has been over it so many times. Now Mr. James get up again if you can, thinks Harriet. I pity you poor girl, for James has an ally that will blow over your proud castle in the air. Old Boreas, the king of the winds will order out a snow-storm by and bye to block up the roads so that none but booted and weather-proof boys can get to school, and you Miss, must loose a day or two, and then find yourself at the foot with those block-head boys who always abide there. But let it not be thought that all those foot lads are deficient in intellect. Look at them when the master's back is turned, and you will see mischievous ingenuity enough to convince you that they might surpass even James and Harriet, had some other faculties been called into exercise besides the mere memory of verbalities.

#### EXTRACTS FROM CONFESSIONS OF A SCHOOL MASTER.

The contents of the eleventh chapter of this little work is worth to any teacher the cost of the volume a hundred fold. It gives the results in some particulars of his ten year's experience, observation and reflection, in the life of a diligent, intelligent, enthusiastic teacher—of one who pursued its labors, not mainly for the pecuniary reward, but from a desire in this way to improve the condition of his fellow men. How much of all his former difficulties, how many acknowledged mistakes and errors, how many anxious days and sleepless nights might have been avoided, how much more cheaply might all the rich treasures of ten year's experience been acquired by a single year's study under experienced practical teachers, and six months practice and observation in a model school? But to our extracts. We would remark that between the ninth and tenth year of his experience as a teacher, he had studied and entered upon the practice of medicine. His reasons for abandoning his new profession, was the conviction that he could do more good as a teacher! he had now sufficiently recovered his health (which was the principal ground of his abandoning it at the close of his ninth year,) and

had now learned the art of preserving it, and that his professional studies had led to think more and more of the importance of common schools, and the indispensable necessity of improving to the highest pitch every form of elementary education and instruction. The step was looked upon with suspicion and disapprobation by his relatives and friends, as a *descent*, a *degradation*, to take charge of a district school at fifteen dollars a month, for one who had been invested with the dignity of a medical diploma. But not so thought our School master.

Having therefore made the necessary arrangements, I quitted my station, and in ten days, found myself once more in a district school. I need not tell you, perhaps, that I felt more real joy in the exchange than most seniors in college would feel, on being appointed to the presidency.

I had placed myself—tho' only a few miles from home—among strangers. Yet it was a pleasant neighborhood; and had some advantages over many others. The schools in that region, as well as elsewhere in the State had been much injured, by an unconditional school fund; which, in dispensing its favors pretty liberally, had gradually led people to rely upon it, so far as there was actual need of applying money; and to put forth no exertions of their own. And he who knows anything of human nature, knows full well that no people, in such circumstances, will long retain much interest in the school which is thus, as it were, supported by a foreign power. However, I have spoken of the evils of funds in the first chapter.

But in the district in which I had now engaged, it was otherwise. They had been in the habit, from year to year, of taxing themselves to a considerable extent, especially for the support of their winter schools. The result was, that they had not only retained a stronger feeling of interest in the school than many other districts were accustomed to, but they actually had better schools. They not only paid a price somewhat larger, but they continued the school longer. And while it lasted, they visited it more.

The district was very compact, and very pleasantly located. The house, though not large, was on the whole good. It consisted principally of the school room and an entrance. It was well warmed and lighted. It was indeed, on a public road, and very near several mechanics' shops, besides a number of dwelling houses. Still it was rather a pleasant location for the winter, though not so pleasant for summer.

The number of pupils was about forty; and they were of all ages, from three to twenty. I engaged for four and a half months, at fifteen dollars and my board a month. Of course I was required to walk around the district, and board in the families. I opened my school early in November.

Here I had resolved on a grand experiment, in school keeping; although I meant to begin cautiously. It was not my intention to attack or even seem to slight old usages. My object was to change the spirit of the school, rather than to innovate largely upon its forms.

No stranger ever begun a district school with better advantages—everything considered—than I did, on this occasion. I had the prepossessions of the people in my favor, with one exception; to which I shall refer presently. They had nearly all heard of my former reputation, as a teacher, as a citizen, and as a professional man; and were therefore prepared to hope much—perhaps too much—from my exertions. I was prepared, too, from what I had heard of them, to expect a good degree of co-operation and support.

#### SPELLING, READING, WRITING, ETC.

*How the spelling was conducted. Writing. Arithmetic. Evening Schools. Assistance given mornings and evenings. School Libraries.*

All my pupils, as is usual in district schools, attended to spelling and reading; and nearly all of them to writing. I had also a very considerable number in arithmetic, grammar and geography. Defining and Composition, moreover, received a degree of attention, especially the former. But of this last and grammar, I shall speak at length in other places.

The spelling and reading were conducted in an appropriate and rational manner, except that at first the lessons were rather too long. But I soon made them shorter, and paid more attention to the manner of their recitation or performance.

In spelling, I took great pains to pronounce each word as it should be pronounced, in good speaking or reading. It was quite customary with young teachers—and it must be confessed, with some old ones—in that region, to pronounce the word, if possible, in such a manner that the pupil could not fail to perceive nearly every letter, even though it were at the sacrifice of the true sounds of those letters. Thus instead of pronouncing the word *regency*, as we pronounce it in correct conversation, with the second and third vowels



short, it was customary to say *regen'cy*; making the *e* in the second syllable so plain that the child need not be in danger of substituting *i* or *u* or *o* for it; and the *y* so plain that it was impossible to mistake that for anything, unless it were for *i*. This wretched practice I had always avoided; but especially did I avoid it this winter.

Nor did I confine the pupils to columns of words, as arranged in the tables. Sometimes I gave them a reading lesson to spell, requiring them to study thoroughly all the hard words they could find in it. A thousand little devices were used to interest them in the exercise, which it would take up too much time now to name. In short the grand point was to make it a rational, rather than a purely mechanical exercise.

Writing was attended to, as in a former school, at the close of each half day; and half an hour was the usual length of each exercise. This plan for teaching writing, in a common district school, is the best I have ever tried; and I can cheerfully commend it to those who have never departed from the old plan of having it going on at all hours, and in almost all ways and circumstances.

Arithmetic was pursued, this winter, in the old fashioned manner; except that I saw more and more the importance of encouraging each pupil to study everything out himself, instead of going to his fellow pupils, or to the teacher, for aid. I urged it on them all to be thorough, as far as they went; and I sometimes put forth questions to them, to test their profoundness.

We had a few evening schools for arithmetic, by particular request of the pupils; but I always avoided them when I could. Not that I was unwilling to devote myself entirely to their service; but because I had reason to doubt both the motives of those of the pupils who were the loudest petitioners on the subject, and their practical utility whenever they were permitted.

I did not hesitate, however, to devote a reasonable measure of attention to any pupil in arithmetic, who wished to study at the school room at any other hours besides the six devoted to school; and as I was usually there, a long time, both before and after school, a few availed themselves of the opportunities thus afforded them.

I had this winter, a very small collection of books which I was accustomed, occasionally, to lend to my pupils; but it did not constitute anything like a regular library. I had grown a little tired of libraries, in the school room; but it was chiefly, I confess, on account of the expense. I still believe that, with judicious management, they might be made to have a good tendency.

To be continued.

#### PRONUNCIATION.

There is no one thing in which teachers set their mark more distinctly on the habits of their pupils, than in the pronunciation of our language. If they pronounce wrong themselves, or do not take constant pains to correct the errors of their pupils, especially those who are young, and whose pliant organs of speech are just adapting themselves to the enunciation of words, the pupils will be sure to mangle and vulgarize the true pronunciation of their mother tongue, and carry with them through life the marks of a defective education. New England has already got the reputation of possessing in her spoken vocabulary, a large stock of provincialisms, which those who boast "that Chatham's language is their mother tongue," would be ashamed to use in educated society or in writing. These provincialisms have been sneered at as the "*flowers and gems of republican rhetoric*," and as constituting the actual colloquial dialect of the Northern States. There is no denying their use—aye, their too common use; and it will require strenuous efforts both in teachers and pupils to banish them from our written and spoken language. The common school must be our principal reliance for the formation of correct habits of pronunciation. This topic has been very justly treated by Mr. Mann, in an article from which we make some extracts. We shall add the list of words often mispronounced.

"The value of correct pronunciation is founded upon the fact, that, as all the words in a language must have some sound, just as all the individuals of a community must have some name, it is as necessary that each word should have his own appropriate sound, by which it may be known, as it is that each individual should have his own proper name, by which he may be known.

Far be it from us to countenance the idea for a moment, that

the most scrupulous observance of rules for pronunciation is to be compared in value with good sense or good feelings.—The expression of sound views and right purposes, though uttered in the worst brogue of Africa or Ireland, is as much superior to the nicest attention to conventional rules, as diamonds to pebbles. But as the brilliancy of diamonds is increased by polish, so is the beauty of wisdom by an appropriate utterance.

Such is the ordinary connexion between correct speech and a good education, that a correct speaker is presumed, among strangers, to be well educated, and although such is not always the case, yet the exceptions are too few to invalidate the rule.

Foppiness in speech is as odious as foppiness in dress; and it is as contemptible for a debater, an advocate, or a clergyman to attract every body's attention to his manner of pronouncing a word, as it would be, were he to stop short in the midst of an argument, or sermon, to show the audience his new vest or boot.

Equally unworthy of sympathy or imitation is that fastidiousness of taste, which is, or pretends to be, not only disgusted but disabled, by all speakers who violate the rules of orthoepy. With some persons the charm of hearing the profoundest subjects discussed by the strongest minds, is lost, if the delivery be faulty, or even if it be unaccompanied with the graces of rhetoric. These persons are like the young miss, who could not tell where the text of a sermon might be found, because she had not her gilt-edged bible to mark it in. Such squeamishness, so far from proving a healthy state of mind, only shows the want of it.

As an incitement and an aid to correctness of speech, we propose in this and subsequent numbers, to present lists of those words, which are most frequently miscalled amongst us; giving in parallel columns, the correct and the vulgar pronunciation. In schools, where the faults which we shall point out, prevail, it will be a good exercise for the teachers to cause the lists to be carefully read by the scholars, in order to present to their own senses the difference between the true and the erroneous, and to cultivate the sense of propriety, as well as to habituate their organs to a correct enunciation.

#### WORDS OFTEN MIS-PRONOUNCED.

arrangements	not arrangements,
ancient	" ancient,
amiableness	" amybleness,
arms	" ams,
adventure	" adventer,
across	" acrost,
agriculture	" agriculter,
act-u-al	" actooal,
accosts	" accoss,
aunt	" ant,
after	" arter,
an-o-in-ted	" an-ine-ted,
against (agēnst)	" a-gāinst,
ad-join-ing	" ad-jine-ing,
architecture (ar-ke-ecture)	" arch-i-ecture, archi-tec-ter
artillery	" artillry,
asylum	" as'y lum,
astonishing	" stonishing,
asked	" ast,
annually	" annooally,
arrow	" arrer,
ally	" al'y,
ap-point-ment	" ap-pint-ment,
always	" alwus,
angels	" āngels,
acts	" acs,
brethren	" brethrun, nor bruthren,
bet	" bate,
beyond	" beyend,
boiling	" biling,
bury (berry)	" būry,
bursting	" busting,

bonnets	not bunnets,
believing	" blevin,
bounds	" bouns,
body	" buddy,
beasts	" beass,
bristle	" brustle,
born	" bawn,
believe	" blieve,
borrow	" borrow,
bellowing	" bellering,
bade	" bade,
Benjamin	" Benjamun,
chamber	" chāber,
cellar	" suller,
cover	" kiver,
cleanliness	" clēanliness,
captain	" cap'n,
commands	" commans,
conqueror	" conqueror,

#### THE USE OF SLATES.

Many a school in which symptoms of solid improvement are visible, we have often observed, shows indications of an increasing partiality for the slate. In the course of the past year or two, we have heard some of the most intelligent and successful teachers of our acquaintance express a high opinion of the peculiar utility of the slate, and have witnessed exercises which fully justified it. We can hardly recommend any experiments or methods more likely to succeed, than slate exercises. We have before alluded to this subject more than once; and given some details in former numbers of this Journal, to which we would refer such of our readers as may wish to try for themselves. We are confident that the use of slates will be generally found highly economical: as they are not expensive, are applicable in numerous ways to different branches, and, with proper care, will last for many years.

In many schools, the children occupy hours which it is not easy to appropriate otherwise, in copying letters, figures, words, sentences, drawings &c., from the walls, cards or books, upon their slates; and those who have observed the results can bear witness to the well known fact, that they thus acquire much command of the hand, a good degree of skill in writing, and the habit of accurate observation, so important, and indispensable. And all these, to a considerable extent, may be acquired by the pupils own exertions, with but occasional direction from the instructor, while the exercises are highly favorable to abstraction, quietness and good order.

We have before recommended slate exercises also for another reason: because the familiar practice of them prepares the pupils for many simultaneous operations; and these, from their nature, train them to prompt obedience. The importance of habitual submission to authority is one of the points most worthy of the attention of a good teacher. On public as well as private accounts, this is a subject which deserves particular care at the present time; and all good methods of instruction which embrace so important a principle of discipline, are doubly recommended to us, by the opposite tendencies of some influences in operation around us.

In short, the variety of occasions in which the slate may be brought into convenient and useful operation in school is so great, that it would be difficult if not impossible to limit it.

#### MORAL AND SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE IN SCHOOLS.

There is nothing that tends so much to throw interest and sanctity around the place of instruction, as the moral and spiritual influences,

which may there be imparted. All the branches that are usually taught, are, no doubt, of great importance, but *they* bear relation mostly to *time*; while that which tends to affect the character, and unfold the higher spiritual powers, connects itself with other worlds, and prepares the immortal spirit to become one of the seraphims at the throne of God.

When these influences are connected with Education, the teacher becomes as an ambassador from heaven, and the school-room, a sphere where the purest and most exalted minds delight to labor—where they find ample room for their efforts, in imparting lessons of noble morality, and uttering divinest truth. The moment we should prevent the teacher from exerting these influences, we should narrow his work, and his office would become shorn of all its original greatness. It is, no doubt, essential to teach a child to read and write; but it is also essential to teach him to reflect, and to love truth. Mere knowledge does not necessarily lead to goodness; nor enlightening the intellect, to improvement of heart. A child may stand high as a scholar, who would not scruple to tell a falsehood: and those who gain the greatest number of school honors, may turn out the worst members of society.

This fact is beginning to be felt. It has awakened much reflection and is leading many to more enlightened views of Education. The defects in our present system, have called out many strong remarks; and (as is the natural tendency in such cases) there has been, perhaps, unqualified censure. In considering the vast importance of exerting a good moral and spiritual influence, some have spoken as if there were no such influence now; as if the present system had only a sort of skeleton deadness, or at best, but mechanical life; as if our teachers had no faith in the soul, and thought the noblest exercise of the mind was, to dot and carry one. Such a view is unjust.—There is much in our present system, that is elevated and holy in its character. There are many places of instruction, which are associated in the minds of the young, with all that is dear and sacred; and many teachers go to their work as if commissioned from above, and feeling that they are throwing around them, influences which will live through the unending ages of eternity.

It is wrong to underrate what is now doing. We have among us, both in our private and public schools, some of the most beautiful spirits devoted to the education of the young. They are splendid examples of what all teachers should be. Their hearts kindle with quiet enthusiasm, when they go to their work. They ask for no higher sphere. They know that there is no higher sphere. They look with awe upon the mystery of the child's being. They look with love, upon these little creatures of God. Faith, to them, draws up the curtain of the future, and they see the temptations and trials—the joys and sorrows, through which they must pass. Nay, more, connecting time and eternity, they glance through ages; and then, looking again upon the young immortal, they desire to buckle on to his young limbs, the whole armor of God, that he may stand in the evil day, struggling triumphantly with the powers of darkness, and gaining in other worlds, that crown of glory which fadeth not away.

To such teachers, the quiet scenes of the schoolroom are full of intense pleasure, of prayerful effort, of sublime hope. They may not speak in tones of extravagance, of what they are doing. There may be a modest stillness in all their acts, but in the depths of their hearts exist the right feelings, and this gives a character to the simplest things which they do.

All teachers are not, however, of this description. There is a gradation from this, down to the most cold-hearted and time-serving pedagogue, who looks upon the young with jealous suspicion, has no faith in their spiritual nature, and cares for little more than the money he obtains.

Of these latter, we trust there are few; and we may well hope, that, as higher views of Education become common, even these few will have a new life, or change their sphere of action. If the best teachers think with awe of their responsible trust, how should the unhallowed hand drop from this ark of the Lord.

Even as things are, there is reason to be thankful that so many good minds are engaged in this work, and that so many good influences are shed abroad. In the mean time, those who fulfil their duties best, will be most anxious for continued improvement; and will be among the earliest to embrace any wise measures for exerting, still more widely, moral and spiritual influence.

With regard to the importance of the subject, abstractly considered, it may be taken for granted, that all present are convinced.—The question then comes up as to the means;—"What shall we do? and how shall we do it?"

Is it best to have stated hours of the day, when moral and spiritual subjects shall be taken up? To this, I see but one objection; it might become a formal and mechanical business, without life; and hence, without advantage. Nay, if it becomes habitually mechanical, the subject will be rendered dull, perhaps disgusting. If a teacher opens the school with prayer, by taking out a prayer book, and reading a prayer without feeling; if, at the striking of the clock, a



class is called out, and a set lesson in morals is recited, this will do but little; indeed, it will probably be an evil. But if the minds of the children can be solemnized for prayer, by some introductory remarks; if the teacher, from a glowing heart, can supplicate God; if an hour can be devoted to conversation upon some moral law, or some spiritual truth, then great good may follow. To the question then, "Shall there be a portion of time set apart for the purpose?" I should say—if it can be entered into heartily and not otherwise.

To the question, whether the teacher should strive to exert these influences at all times, I would answer, yes. Whether there are stated times, or not, a teacher should always, indirectly, shed around him the lights of truth and virtue. They should not be fastened on to the present system, but naturally flow through it, like the vital stream. And here there should be caution; for a person may reiterate good maxims till they become irksome; he may sermonize till he wearies. Any thing like cant, becomes repulsive. Let what is said, be simple, and come from the heart. The true way, is to say but little at a time, and let that be in season. If a teacher makes few remarks (the natural expression of feeling) about the beauty of a flower, or the loveliness of Nature, it is better than if he made a formal speech. It is well timed and well directed words that accomplish the end.

The next question which arises, "Should there be text books?" Such books are of great value, but, perhaps, they are more valuable for the teacher to study at home, than to have in the schoolroom.—Most books that have as yet been published, are good, principally, as affording hints which the teacher may apply as he thinks proper. Free conversations are better than printed dialogues. Take the idea as it exists in the child's mind, and strive to unfold it. Let the conversations grow out of surrounding circumstances. It is not desirable to exclude text-books; for if there were good books, they might be made of incalculable advantage; but even while there are not books, unexceptionable in all particulars, the books that we have are of great value to be studied by the teacher in private. In this way, the experience of others can be gained; and would it not be well for teachers to have in their library whatever books there may be of this nature?—*Mr. Waterston's Lectures.*

#### PRIVATE SCHOOLS—THEIR ORIGIN AND INFLUENCE ON COMMON SCHOOLS.

The following remarks on the origin and influence of select or private schools, is taken from the First Annual Report of Mr. Mann, Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. They are as applicable to Connecticut as to Massachusetts, and are coincident with our own observations and reflections.

Opposite to this class, who tolerate, from apathy, a depression in the Common Schools, there is another class who affix so high a value upon the culture of their children, and understand so well the necessity of a skillful preparation of means for its bestowment, that they turn away from the Common Schools, in their depressed state, and seek, elsewhere, the helps of a more enlarged and thorough education. Thus the standard, in descending to a point corresponding with the views and wants of one portion of society, falls below the demands and the regards of another. Out of different feelings grow different plans; and while one remains fully content with the Common School, the other builds up the private school or the academy. The education fund is thus divided into two parts.—Neither of the halves does a quarter of the good which might be accomplished by a union of the whole. One party pays an adequate price, but has a poor school; the other has a good school, but at more than fourfold cost. Were their funds and their interest combined, the poorer school might be as good as the best; and the dearest almost as low as the cheapest.—This last-mentioned class, embraces a considerable portion, perhaps a majority, of the wealthy persons in the State; but it also includes another portion, numerically much greater, who, whether rich or poor, have a true perception of the sources of their children's individual and domestic well-being, and who consider the common necessities of their life, their food and fuel and clothes, and all their bodily comforts as superfluities, compared with the paramount necessity of a proper mental and moral culture of their offspring.

The maintenance of free schools rests wholly upon the social principle. It is emphatically a case where men, individually powerless, are collectively strong. The population of Massachusetts, being more than eighty to the square mile

gives it the power of maintaining Common Schools. Take the whole range of the western and south-western States, and their population, probably, does not exceed a dozen or fifteen to the square mile. Hence, except in favorable localities, Common Schools are impossible; as the population upon a territory of convenient size for a district, is too small to sustain a school. Here, nothing is easier. But by dividing our funds, we cast away our natural advantages. We voluntarily reduce ourselves to the feebleness of a State, having but half our density of population.

It is generally supposed, that this severance of interests, and consequent diminution of power, have increased much of late, and are now increasing in an accelerated ratio. This is probable, for it is a self-aggravating evil. Its origin and progress, are simple and uniform. Some few persons in a village or town, finding the advantages of the Common School inadequate to their wants, unite to establish a private one. They transfer their children from the former to the latter. The heart goes with the treasure. The Common Schools cease to be visited by those whose children are in the private. Such parents decline serving as committee men. They have now no personal motive to vote for, or advocate, any increase of the town's annual appropriation for schools; to say nothing of the temptation to discourage such increase in indirect ways, or even to vote directly against it. If, by this means, some of the best scholars happen to be taken from the Common School, the standard of that school is lowered. The lower classes in a school have no abstract standard of excellence, and seldom aim at higher attainments than such as they daily witness.—All children, like all men, rise easily to the common level.—There, the mass stop; strong minds only ascend higher. But raise the standard, and, by a spontaneous movement, the mass will rise again, and reach it. Hence the removal of the most forward scholars from a school is not a small misfortune.—Again; the teacher of the Common School rarely visits or associates, except where the scholars of his own school are the origin of the acquaintance, and the bond of attachment. All this inevitably depresses and degrades the Common School. In this depressed and degraded state, another portion of the parents find it, in fitness and adequacy, inferior to their wants; and, as there is now a private school in the neighborhood, the strength of the inducement, and the facility of the transfer, overbalance the objection of increased expense, and the doors of the Common School close, at once, upon their children, and upon their interest in its welfare. Thus another blow is dealt; then others escape; action and reaction alternate, until the Common School is left to the management of those, who have not the desire or the power, either to improve it or to command a better. Under this silent, but rapid corrosion, it recently happened, in one of the most flourishing towns of the State, having a population of more than three thousand persons, that the principal district school actually ran down and was not kept for two years. I have been repeatedly assured, where every bias of my informants would lead them to extenuate and not to magnify the facts, that, in populous villages and central districts, where there is naturally a concentration of wealth and intelligence, and a juster appreciation of the blessings of a good education, and where, therefore, the Common School ought to be the best in the town, it was the poorest.

The average expense for tuition of all those attending private schools and academies, inclusive of those small and short private schools which are kept in the districts between the winter and summer terms, and which comprise, probably, more than one half of the scholars attending the whole number, is more than fourfold the average expense of those attending the public schools.

Mr. Mann attributes the establishment and patronage of private high schools and academies, to the neglect or refusal of towns of three or four thousand inhabitants, in many instances, to maintain the Grammar School, or a school of a higher order than the district school, "for the benefit of all the inhabitants of the town." When this is done, as is the case in many such towns, the standard of Common School education is higher, and its benefits more widely diffused. On the other hand, "the refusal of the town to maintain the free town school, drives a portion of its inhabitants to establish the

private school or academy. When established, these institutions tend strongly to diminish the annual appropriations of the town; they draw their ablest recruits from the Common Schools; and, by being able to offer higher compensation, they have a pre-emptive right to the best qualified teachers; while simultaneously, the district schools are reduced in length, deteriorated in quality, and to some extent, bereft of talents competent for instruction."

Some objections are urged, on both sides, to a restitution of our system to its original design; but, as they are anti-social in their nature, they must be dissipated by a more enlarged view of the subject. Citizens, living remote from the place, where the town school would probably be kept, allege the difference in the distances of residence, and the consequent inequality of advantages, derivable from it, as arguments against its maintenance. They, therefore, resist its establishment, and thus extinguish all chances of a better education, for a vast majority of the children in the town, whatever may be their talents or genius. They debar some, perhaps their own offspring, from the means of reaching a higher sphere of usefulness and honor. They forbid their taking the first steps, which are as necessary as the last, in the ascension to excellence.—They surrender every vantage ground to those who can and will, in any event, command the means of a higher education for their children. Because the balance of advantages cannot be mathematically adjusted, as in the nature of things it cannot be, they cast their own shares into the adverse scale; as though it were some compensation, when there is not an absolute equality, to make the inequality absolute. The cost of education is nothing to the rich, while the means of it are every thing to the poor.

Even if the argument, against the town school, thus broadly stated, had validity, its force is essentially impaired by the consideration, that this class of schools need not be confined to one fixed place; as the statute expressly provides that they may be kept "alternately at such places in the town, as the inhabitants at their annual meeting shall determine."

On the other hand, the patrons of the private school plead the moral necessity of sustaining it, because, they say, some of the children in the public school are so addicted to profanity or obscenity, so prone to trickishness, or to vulgar and mischievous habits, as to render a removal of their own children from such contaminating influences an obligatory precaution. But would such objectors bestow that guardian care, that parental watchfulness upon the Common Schools, which an institution, so wide and deep reaching in its influences, demands of all intelligent men, might not these repellent causes be mainly abolished? Reforms ought to be originated and carried forward by the intelligent portion of society; by those who can see most links in the chain of causes and effects; and that intelligence is false to its high trusts, which stands aloof from the labor of enlightening the ignorant and ameliorating the condition of the unfortunate. And what a vision must rise before the minds of all men, endued with the least glimmer of foresight, in the reflection, that, after a few swift years, those children, whose welfare they now discard, and whose associations they deprecate, will constitute more than five sixths of the whole body of that community, of which their own children will be only a feeble minority vulnerable at every point, and utterly incapable of finding a hiding-place for any earthly treasure, where the witness, the juror, and the voter cannot reach and annihilate it!

The theory of our laws and institutions undoubtedly is, first, that in every district of every town in the Commonwealth, there should be a free district school, sufficiently safe, and sufficiently good, for all the children within its territory, where they may be well instructed in the rudiments of knowledge, formed to propriety of demeanor, and imbued with the principles of duty; and secondly, in regard to every town, having such an increased population as implies the possession of sufficient wealth, that there should be a school of an advanced character, offering an equal welcome to each one of the same children, whom a peculiar destination, or an impelling spirit of genius, shall send to its open doors—especially to the children of the poor, who cannot incur the expenses of a residence from home in order to attend such a school. It is

on this common platform, that a general acquaintanceship should be formed between the children of the same neighborhood. It is here, that the affinities of a common nature should unite them together so as to give the advantages of pre-occupancy and a stable possession to fraternal feelings, against the alienating competitions of subsequent life.

After the State shall have secured to all its children, that basis of knowledge and morality, which is indispensable to its own security; after it shall have supplied them with the instruments of that individual prosperity, whose aggregate will constitute its own social prosperity; then they may be emancipated from its tutelage, each one to go whithersoever his well-instructed mind shall determine. At this point, seminaries for higher learning, academies and universities, should stand ready to receive, at private cost, all whose path to any ultimate destination may lie through their halls. Subject, of course, to many exceptions,—all, however, inconsiderable, compared with the generality of the rule,—this is the paternal and comprehensive theory of our institutions; and, is it possible, that a practical contradiction of this theory can be wise, until another shall be devised, offering some chances at least of equally valuable results?

#### DOMESTIC INSTRUCTION.

We have heretofore remarked, in a brief manner, on the importance of co-operating in our families with the teachers of our children. We may do more than some may imagine to promote their progress in learning, even during the short periods which we daily spend with them at table, if, unfortunately, we should be too much pressed with business to find any other opportunity.

"Well, my dear, what did you learn yesterday at school?" Or, "What study do you like best?" Or, "What useful thing did you see in your books, or hear from your teacher?" How easy it is to form a habit of asking such questions; how pleasing and profitable that conversation to which they may lead; and how encouraging may be the practice to the young around us!

But to those parents and elder friends, who are able to associate children with them at their work in the field or in the house, or in an early walk among the attractive and instructive objects of nature, how much more may be done to render their progress in knowledge and moral improvement agreeable, rapid and practical.

Let the school be first supplied with a good teacher, and furnished with the proper means of instruction, and then let the parents co-operate with him in such modes as have been hinted at, and others which common sense and a love of the object will point out, particularly in speaking of the teacher with merited respect and affection, and expressing a high regard for his character, opinions, and society, and the beneficial influence of the school may be greatly increased.

#### EXTRACTS FROM CHANNING ON SELF CULTURE.

**LABOR IS A MEANS OF SELF CULTURE.**—The man, who, in working, no matter in what way, strives perpetually to fulfil his obligations thoroughly, to do his whole work faithfully, to be honest, not because honesty is the best policy, but for the sake of justice, and that he may render to every man his due, such a laborer is continually building up in himself one of the greatest principles of morality and religion. Every blow on the anvil, on the earth, or whatever material he works upon, contributes something to the perfection of his nature.

Labor is a school of benevolence as well as justice. A man to support himself must serve others. He must do or produce something for their comfort or gratification. This is one of the beautiful ordinations of Providence, that, to get a living, a man must be useful. Now this usefulness ought to be an end in his labor as truly as to earn his living. He ought to think of the benefit of those he works for, as well as of his own; and in so doing, in desiring amidst his sweat and toil to serve others as well as himself, he is exercising and growing in benevolence, as truly as if he were distributing bounty with a large hand to the poor. Such a motive hallows and dignifies the commonest pursuit. It is strange, that laboring men do not think more of the vast usefulness of their toils, and take a benevolent pleasure in them on this account. This beautiful city, with its houses, furniture, markets, public walks, and numberless accommodations, has grown up under the hands of artizans and



other laborers, and ought they not to take a disinterested joy in their work? One would think, that a carpenter or mason, on passing a house which he had reared, would say to himself, "this work of mine is giving comfort and enjoyment every day and hour to a family, and will continue to be a kindly shelter, a domestic gathering-place, an abode of affection, for a century or more after I sleep in the dust;" and ought not a generous satisfaction to spring up at the thought? It is by thus interweaving goodness with common labors, that we give it strength, and make it a habit of the soul.

Labor may be so performed as to be a high impulse to the mind. Be a man's vocation what it may, his rule should be to do its duties perfectly, to do the best he can, and thus to make perpetual progress in his art. In other words, Perfection should be proposed; and this I urge not only for its usefulness to society, nor for the sincere pleasure which a man takes in seeing a work well done. This is an important means of Self-culture. In this way the idea of Perfection takes root in the mind, and spreads far beyond the man's trade. He gets a tendency towards completeness in whatever he undertakes. Slack, slovenly performance in any department of life, is more apt to offend him. His standard of action rises, and every thing is better done for his thoroughness in his common vocation.

**FREE INSTITUTIONS AND SELF-CULTURE.**—We find means of self-culture in our Free Government, in our Political relations and duties. It is a great benefit of free institutions, that they do much to awaken and keep in action a nation's mind. We are told, that the education of the multitude is necessary to the support of a republic; but it is equally true, that a republic is a powerful means of educating the multitude. It is the people's University. In a free state, solemn responsibilities are imposed on every citizen; great subjects are to be discussed; great interests to be decided. The individual is called to determine measures affecting the well-being of millions, and the destinies of posterity. He must consider not only the internal relations of his native land, but its connexion with foreign states, and judge of a policy which touches the whole civilized world. He is called by his participation in the national sovereignty, to cherish public spirit, a regard to the general weal. A man who purposes to discharge faithfully these obligations, is carrying on a generous self-culture. The great public questions, which divide opinion around him, and provoke earnest discussion, of necessity invigorate his intellect, and accustom him to look beyond himself. He grows up to a robustness, force, enlargement of mind, unknown under despotic rule.

I respectfully counsel those whom I address, to take part in the politics of their country. These are the true discipline of a people, and do much for their education. I counsel you to labor for a clear understanding of the subjects which agitate the community, to make them your study, instead of wasting your leisure in vague, passionate talk about them. The time thrown away by the mass of the people on the rumors of the day, might, if better spent, give them a good acquaintance with the constitution, laws, history and interests of their country, and thus establish them in those great principles by which particular measures are to be determined. In proportion as the people thus improve themselves, they will cease to be the tools of designing politicians. Their intelligence, not their passions and jealousies, will be addressed by those who seek their votes. They will exert, not a nominal, but a real influence on the government and the destinies of the country, and at the same time will forward their own growth in truth and virtue.

**TIME FOR SELF-CULTURE.**—But it will be asked, how can the laboring classes find time for self-culture. I answer, as I have already intimated, that an earnest purpose finds time or makes time. It seizes on spare moments, and turns larger fragments of leisure to golden account. A man who follows his calling with industry and spirit, and uses his earnings economically, will always have some portion of the day at command; and it is astonishing, how fruitful of improvement a short season becomes, when eagerly seized and faithfully used. It has often been observed, that they who have most time at their disposal, profit by it least. A single hour in the day, steadily given to the study of an interesting subject, brings unexpected accumulations of knowledge. The improvements made by well disposed pupils, in many of our country schools, which are open but three months in the year, and in our Sunday schools, which are kept but one or two hours in the week, show what can be brought to pass by slender means. The affections, it is said, sometimes crowd years into moments, and the intellect has something of the same power. Volumes have not only been read, but written, in flying journeys. I have known a man of vigorous intellect, who had enjoyed few advantages of early education, and whose mind was almost engrossed by the details of an extensive business, but who composed a book of much original thought, in steamboats and on horseback, while visiting distant customers. The succession of the seasons gives to many of the working class opportunities for intellectual improvement. The winter brings leisure to the husbandman, and winter evenings to many laborers in the city. Above

all, in Christian countries, the seventh day is released from toil. The seventh part of the year, no small portion of existence, may be given by almost every one to intellectual and moral culture. Why is it that Sunday is not made a more effectual means of improvement? Undoubtedly the seventh day is to have a religious character; but religion connects itself with all the great subjects of human thought, and leads to and aids the study of all. God is in nature. God is in history. Instruction in the works of the Creator, so as to reveal his perfection in their harmony, beneficence and grandeur; instruction in the histories of the church and the world, so as to show in all events his moral government, and to bring out the great moral lessons in which human life abounds; instruction in the lives of philanthropists, of saints, of men eminent for piety and virtue; all these branches of teaching enter into religion, and are appropriate to Sunday; and through these, a vast amount of knowledge may be given to the people. Sunday ought not to remain the dull and fruitless season that it now is to multitudes. It may be clothed with a new interest and a new sanctity. It may give a new impulse to the nation's soul. I have thus shown, that time may be found for improvement; and the fact is, that among our most improved people, a considerable part consists of persons who pass the greatest portion of every day at the desk, in the counting room, or in some other sphere, chained to tasks which have very little tendency to expand the mind. In the progress of society, with the increase of machinery, and with other aids which intelligence and philanthropy will multiply, we may expect that more and more time will be redeemed from manual labor, for intellectual and social occupations.

**SELF-CULTURE MULTIPLIES THE SOURCES OF AMUSEMENT.**—But some will say, "Be it granted that the working classes may find some leisure; should they not be allowed to spend it in relaxation? Is it not cruel, to summon them from toils of the hand to toils of the mind? They have earned pleasure by the day's toil, and ought to partake it." Yes, let them have pleasure. Far be it from me to dry up the fountains, to blight the spots of verdure, where they refresh themselves after life's labors. But I maintain, that self-culture multiplies and increases their pleasures, that it creates new capacities of enjoyment, that it saves their leisure from being, what it too often is, dull and wearisome, that it saves them from rushing for excitement to indulgences destructive to body and soul. It is one of the great benefits of self-improvement, that it raises a people above the gratifications of the brute, and gives them pleasures worthy of men. In consequence of the present intellectual culture of our country, imperfect as it is, a vast amount of enjoyment is communicated to men, women and children, of all conditions, by books, an enjoyment unknown to ruder times. At this moment, a number of gifted writers are employed in multiplying entertaining works. \* \* \* In proportion as the mind is cultivated, it takes delight in history and biography, in descriptions of nature, in travels, in poetry, and even graver works. Is the laborer then defrauded of pleasure by improvement? There is another class of gratifications to which self-culture introduces the mass of the people. I refer to lectures, discussions, meetings of associations for benevolent and literary purposes, and to other like methods of passing the evening, which every year is multiplying among us. A popular address from an enlightened man, who has a tact to reach the minds of the people, is a high gratification, as well as a source of knowledge. The profound silence in our public halls, where these lectures are delivered to crowds, shows that cultivation is no foe to enjoyment.—I have a strong hope, that by the progress of intelligence, taste, and morals among all portions of society, a class of public amusements will grow up among us, bearing some resemblance to the theatre, but purified from the gross evils which degrade our present stage, and which, I trust, will seal its ruin. \* \* \* In proportion as culture spreads among a people, the cheapest and commonest of all pleasures, conversation, increases in delight. This, after all, is the great amusement of life, cheering us round our hearths, often cheering our work, stirring our hearts gently, acting on us like the balmy air or the bright light of heaven, so silently and continually, that we hardly think of its influence. This source of happiness is too often lost to men of all classes for want of knowledge, mental activity, and refinement of feeling; and do we defraud the laborer of his pleasure, by recommending to him improvements which will place the daily, hourly, blessings of conversation within his reach?

#### LYCEUMS AND SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS.

##### HARTFORD YOUNG MEN'S INSTITUTE.

We have again and again called the attention of the friends of education to the powerful instrumentality which Lyceums and similar institutions can become in the great work of promoting intelligence in society. We have almost invariably

found that those who were establishing and maintaining them were ready to promote the advancement of common school education, which they felt to be at the foundation of permanent and enlarged success in their several enterprises. We are glad to find that in most of our large towns they already exist in some of the modified forms of the Lyceum system, and that during the coming winter more or less extended courses of popular lectures will be delivered.

We give below a few extracts from the Report of the Executive Committee of the Hartford Young Men's Institute.

Soon after their appointment, the Committee presented the claims of this Institution upon their fellow citizens, as affording the means of intellectual and moral improvement, as well to those who have already enjoyed the advantages of a systematic education, as to that larger number whose opportunities have been more restricted, and as enabling all to redeem some portion of that large amount of leisure which all enjoy, but which many among us waste in unprofitable idling, and too many others squander in the pursuit of pleasures, which end only in sorrow. This appeal was responded to by such an accession of members, and liberal donations in books and money, as enabled the Committee to put the main departments of the Institute into successful operation, and place it in a single year, on a footing of equality with similar institutions of a much longer standing in neighboring cities.

The Institute numbers at present 344 annual members, and 83 life members. Soon after the organization of the Institute, two debating classes were formed, which have held weekly meetings with unabated interest.

Early steps were taken to provide a course of popular lectures on literary and scientific topics, which, by its intrinsic value and interest, should secure the general attendance of our citizens. The numerous and animating presence of persons of all ages, occupations, and of both sexes, from the opening of the course to its close, showed that these lectures met a want, which no other resource of pleasure or improvement in our midst could so well supply.

By an arrangement with the Hartford Library Company, and the purchase of new books, the aggregate number of volumes now in the possession of the Institute exceeds 5,600.

Provisions have been made for securing all the valuable works which may issue from the press, and a portion of the funds, having received this specific destination from the donors, a resource is thus provided for several years to come.

A reading room has been opened in connection with the library, embracing at this time more than twenty of the principal quarterly, monthly and weekly periodicals. As the members have an opportunity of taking any work from the library to the reading room, and as it is open at all times, with suitable conveniences for reading and writing, it offers an agreeable and profitable place of resort in all hours of leisure.

The rooms of the Institute are central, convenient of access, and sufficiently commodious for the present wants of the members; still, the experience of the past has shown that there is a want in our city of an edifice, with sufficient accommodations for the various literary and scientific associations now existing, or

which may hereafter be formed. Such an edifice, besides these accommodations, should contain a lecture room, disconnected from any religious society, sufficiently large to accommodate all who on extraordinary, as well as ordinary occasions, may wish to attend, with rooms for experiments. Within the walls of such an edifice should be collected a gallery of paintings and sculpture, as well as a museum of science and the arts. Without calculating on the influence which such a gallery would silently but effectually spread over the public taste and habits, it is to be hoped that the direct and positive advantages which would accrue to our city, and to each successive generation of youth, from having such an edifice in our midst, consecrated to the pursuits of literature, and science, and the arts—a temple of popular education in its various departments—will induce those who have the means, and who from their known liberality, are not wanting in the disposition, to take the necessary steps to provide it.

Such is the present condition and such the resources of the Institute. Its success is no longer problematical. It has demonstrated its own capacity of usefulness, and contains within itself the elements of increased prosperity. The benefits of the library are only limited by the number who may avail themselves of its advantages, and by the circle of selection which the means of the Institute may prescribe. The debating classes may continue to afford the opportunity of friendly discussion of questions of social, civil and literary importance, and the reading of the fire-side, and the observations of daily life, be made more and more useful as the means of intellectual improvement. Classes of mutual instruction, formed of any number wishing to pursue a similar study, or investigate a single subject, is a medium of improvement not yet resorted to. And the public lectures, one of the most efficient instruments of popular education, can be made far more serviceable to mental improvement than they have yet been. No one step in modern improvement has done so much to extend the bounds of knowledge, to bring philosophy and science and literature from the studies and cells of scholars, into the work-shop, the daily business and the fire-sides of men, as the institution of public lectures. Ranging through the whole circle of knowledge, the arts which supply our wants, multiply our comforts, and embellish our external condition—the sciences which lie at the foundation of these arts and unfold to us the wisdom and benevolence of God in the universe of his creation, the relations of every individual to himself, to society, to his country and to God—the sentiments and habits which fix public opinion and give tone to public morals, ranging through these and kindred topics, the popular lecturer has filled up, and enlivened, and enriched many an evening hour, and enabled vast numbers, which have thronged the lecture room in this country and in Europe, to go back to their fire-sides and the ordinary business of life, better fitted for the labors, and with a keener relish for the enjoyments which awaited them there.

It only requires a more rigorous system in the course of lectures, and a thorough elementary education, to make the institution of popular lectures, an every way valuable department of popular education and amusement.

With these views of the various means of self and



mutual education and advancement which this Institute in common with similar associations, possesses, your Committee cannot but express the hope that we may all continue to be sensible of the advantages we enjoy—that the interest which it has created and enlisted in this community will not be spent or permitted to flag—but that its means of social and individual good, the library, the lectures, the classes for debate and mutual instruction, will continue to be felt for good in the business and the pleasures of life—"in the cause of Truth, in the cause of Justice, and in the cause of Religion."

#### AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

The tenth annual session of the "American Institute of Instruction," was begun in this town on Thursday, August 23, the first meeting being held in the Town Hall at 8½ o'clock, A. M. The Hon. Wm. B. Calhoun, President of the Association, occupied the chair. The usual preliminary business was transacted.

At 10 o'clock, the Institute adjourned to Rev. Mr. Peabody's church. After the meeting had been opened with prayer, by Mr. Peabody, the introductory lecture was delivered by Robert Rantoul, Jr. In relation to this lecture, we adopt the following remarks from the Republican:

"Mr. Rantoul's discourse was very able and very lucid. The leading topic was the importance of an improved and thorough system of common school education. He regarded this as indispensable to the success of the political experiment, which the United States have entered upon—the establishment of a model government. Such a system of universal education was the means by which the many, who had wrested the power from the few, could build up a government for their own benefit. The national morality, which would be but the result of such a system, would sustain and fortify such a government. He alluded to the movement which is every where going on in favor of diffused intelligence and virtue, and of course of freedom. Our school system needed, he said, great improvement. The standard of education must be raised;—and all must be taught largely and extensively what is necessary to a knowledge of their rights and duties, and conducive to the amelioration of their condition. All power belonged to the people; and the people must be intelligent and virtuous. He referred to the establishment of schools for the education of teachers, and asked for them the encouragement and aid of the community, towards the maturing of this experiment. The address contained a large amount of details and statistics and other views, of which the above is an outline, all of which were expressed with great clearness and evidently interested a large and attentive audience."

The Institute met in the afternoon at 2½ o'clock in the Town Hall, where after the transaction of business, at 3 o'clock, a lecture was delivered by Mr. Fuller of Providence, on "the use of libraries in common schools," and other topics connected with this subject.

After this lecture, the Institute had a short recess, and then assembled again at Mr. Peabody's church, where a lecture was delivered by Dr. Metcalf of Mendon, on physical education, particularly in reference to the functions of the skin. The lecture was full of interesting and instructive remarks of a direct practical character in relation to the physical training of children. His admonitory appeals to females on the injurious and fatal tendencies of certain modes of dress were peculiarly striking and impressive, and we hope will not be unheeded by the fair portion of his hearers. There are facts enough on this subject, one would suppose, of such a startling character as to compel the tyranny of fashion to yield to the imperious demands of health.

In the evening of Thursday, a meeting of the Institute was held in the Town Hall for discussion, in which all were invited to participate. The subject of Normal Schools was introduced by the Committee of Arrangements, in the form of a resolution approving of their establishment; and the consideration of the same occupied the whole of the evening. The meeting was addressed by Messrs. Thayer, Carter and Emerson of Boston, Mr. Pettes of Bookline, Mr. Mack of Cambridge, Mr. Greenleaf of Brooklyn, N. Y., Mr. James of Philadelphia, Dr. Osgood, and Mr. Mann. After a full discussion of the advantages of such institutions, and the objections urged against them, the resolution was adopted by a vote apparently unanimous.

On Friday morning at 9 o'clock, a lecture was delivered by the Rev. Emerson Davis of Westfield, on the mind, and the mode of developing its powers—replete with sound practical instruction to parents, teachers, and all educators of youth.

After a short recess a lecture was delivered at 11 o'clock, by Mr. L. B. Lincoln of Deerfield, on the means and benefits of cultivating

classical taste in our common schools. At the close of the lecture, Mr. Thayer of Boston, made a few remarks on the topic of the lecture, viz: the planting of shade trees around school houses. He said that in passing from Worcester to Springfield, he was struck with the cheerless appearance in this respect of the school houses by the way. A deficiency which could be so easily supplied, ought not, he said, to be suffered to remain; and he earnestly urged upon parents, school committees, &c. the importance of properly attending to this subject, both as a matter of taste, and of comfort to the pupils.

The Institute met again in the afternoon at 2 o'clock. The Hon. Wm. B. Calhoun was re-elected President.

At 3 o'clock a lecture was delivered by Rev. H. A. Miles of Lowell, on "Natural Theology as a study in our schools."

In the evening of Friday, the Institute held a meeting for extemporaneous discussion. The subject proposed was, "the best modes of remedying existing defects in reading and spelling in the community." The subject was thoroughly considered, and the different modes adopted by different teachers were exhibited and compared. A large number of gentlemen took part in the discussion, among whom were Mr. Greenleaf, Mr. Pettes, Prof. Stowe, Mr. Mann, Mr. Thayer, and Rev. D. Clarke.

On Saturday morning, at 8½ o'clock, the Institute met at Mr. Peabody's church. After the transaction of business, a lecture was delivered at 9 o'clock, by Thomas Cushing, Jr. on "the division of labor in the business of instruction."

The Institute had then a short recess, and at 11 o'clock a lecture was delivered by David Mack of Cambridge, on the importance of *adaptation by teachers of their instructions to the progress and exigencies of society.*

The Institute met again in the afternoon of Saturday, and at 3 o'clock, a lecture was delivered by G. F. Thayer of Boston, on "Courtesy or good breeding, as it should be inculcated and practiced in our schools, and carried out in the common intercourse of society"—a subject which has been too much overlooked and neglected by teachers and others, from a mistaken notion that it is of little importance. The rules and principles of courtesy laid down by the lecturer, if more generally adopted and acted upon, would add much to the enjoyments and smoothness of social life. The lecture was followed by an interesting discussion, in which Prof. Stowe, Mr. Mann, Mr. Pettes, Mr. Greenleaf, and Mr. Emerson took part.

On Monday morning, August 26, the Institute met again at Mr. Peabody's church for business, and at 10 o'clock adjourned to attend the Common School Convention of the County.

In the evening of Monday, a meeting of the Institute was held at Mr. Peabody's church, when a lecture was delivered by Prof. Stowe, "on the reading and study of the Bible, as a means of moral and intellectual improvement."

On Tuesday morning at 9 o'clock, a lecture was delivered by Alexander H. Everett, on "the progress of moral science and its practical application to the concerns of common life during the last three or four centuries."

After a short recess, at 11 o'clock, the last lecture was delivered by T. P. Rodman of Providence, "on the importance of a love of learning for its own sake, in reference to intellectual advancement."

With this lecture the literary exercises of the Institute were closed—and after passing a few resolutions the meeting was dissolved.

The lectures and discussions of the Institute have been fully attended, and the interest of the occasion well sustained throughout; and our citizens have reason to be grateful to those gentlemen, who have gratuitously afforded them the rich intellectual treat with which they have been favored the past week.—*Springfield Gazette.*

#### CONNECTICUT STATE LYCEUM.

A special meeting of the Connecticut State Lyceum, was held in this place, on Wednesday last. Several gentlemen from abroad were present, and addressed the meeting, among whom were Gen. Johnson, President of the Lyceum, Rev. Dr. Field, of Haddam, President of Washington College, H. Barnard, Jr. Esq. of Hartford, Rev. A. B. Chapin, of New Haven, and Rev. Mr. Bradley, of East Haddam.

Resolutions—recommending the establishment of schools of different grades, open to all, rich and poor, and made common in its best sense, both from their cheapness and their good quality—the introduction of libraries, adapted to the reading of the older children in schools, and of families, into every school society or district in the State—more thorough instruction in the branches now attempted to be taught, and as far as it can be done judiciously, a wider range of study, into all of our schools—the investigation of all matters of local history and the communication of the results to the Connecticut Historical Society—these resolutions, involving many incidental topics, were discussed by the gentlemen above named, and by Messrs. Webb, and Saxe of Middletown.

In the afternoon, Dr. Field addressed the Lyceum on "School Gov-

ernment." An excellent essay was read by the Rev. Mr. Chapin, the analysis of the English Language in reference to orthography and pronunciation. It has often been regretted, that, in the advancement of Education in our country, so little attention has been paid to the systematic cultivation of the language we use, especially as regards its relation to the Anglo-Saxon and other languages from which it has been derived; and much credit is due to the author of the Essay, for the zeal and success with which, it is understood, he has cultivated this rich and important field. Mr. Chapin could not, perhaps, do the cause of learning a better service than by giving to the public an Anglo-Saxon Grammar, (and perhaps a Dictionary,) of a size and form adapted to our present wants. His essay before the Lyceum deserves well to be put in print.

Mr. B. adley's Essay, read in the evening, upon the origin and derivation of Surnames, was such as might have been expected from the talents and industry of its author. It showed clearly, if there is sometimes "magic in a name," there is philosophy also; and if mere chance or caprice has given origin to them, their adoption has not been without reason and even propriety.

The exercises of the evening, and of the occasion, were closed by the reading, (by Mr. Nind,) of a beautiful Essay on the "Cultivation of a Taste for the Beautiful," by Mrs. SIGOURNEY, which, from the well known talents of the fair authoress, it is quite unnecessary to commend.

On the whole, the meeting of the Lyceum was highly interesting, even beyond our expectations.—*Abridged from Middletown Sentinel.*

#### DANBURY—SCHOOL MEETING.

There was a numerous assemblage at the Methodist Meeting House on Wednesday, Nov. 6, and the exercises were highly interesting. The meeting was organized by the appointment of ROY STARR, as Chairman, and Rev. D. H. SHORT, as sec., and was addressed by Hon. S. Church, H. Dutton, Mr. Short, and others.

Judge C. said he had addressed some remarks to the Grand Jury, a day or two previous, respecting the general diffusion of education as a preventive of crime. He little thought that these remarks would have called him forth as a public speaker on the subject; but he could not decline the flattering invitation which he had received.—The subject is one of great importance—its bearings upon all the great interests of society of too much importance for a proper consideration of it by one so poorly prepared. New England owes all the distinguishing excellencies of her character to her common schools and on this basis all her institutions are founded. As a preventive of crime, especially, is the subject of prime importance, and the fact cannot be too strongly enforced upon the public mind. Our criminal calendars show the close connexion between intelligence and virtue, ignorance and vice. Judge C. related some facts which he had gathered from an intelligent Prussian gentleman, respecting the provision for education in his country; no child there, over four years of age, could be without instruction. This gentleman had examined the criminal calendar of the United States, and the result was four times as many flagrant crimes here as in Prussia; hence he inferred the importance of education as a preventive of crime. It is useless to enact laws for a population growing up in ignorance. Every member of society should consider that he has a duty to perform in this matter—a personal interest and an individual responsibility, which he cannot justly neglect.

It is evident that there has been a decline in the standard of our common schools. It has been a matter of general complaint, and the subject has been brought to the notice of our Legislature for several years past. The fact is generally acknowledged, but no one knows how to remedy it. It is the opinion of some that the school fund has diminished the interest in them, by making education too cheap; formerly the support of schools depended upon public taxation, and some think that the better system. The great object to be gained is, a knowledge of the causes of this decline, for a remedy never can be applied till we know what the evils are. The great difficulty, in his opinion, is a want of public interest in them. Many could look back to a different state of things. Thirty or forty years ago there were few select schools, boarding schools, or academies. The public then looked to the common school as the place of educating their children. He was opposed to the admission of children of all ages into select schools; he thought it would be better for both, if they were kept at the common school until they were 13 years of age. If parents who

can afford it, take their children from the common school to send them to the select school, others less able to do so will imitate the example, until the former is left to droop for support. It is a great mistake that the benefits arising from common school instruction are confined to those who have children, and that those who have none have no concern in them. There is not the same difference in reference to any other philanthropic object, and yet the common school is of as much importance as the Bible Society or Missionary Society. He repeated that the character of New England is attributable to her common schools, and from them we have received almost all the blessings we enjoy. Every man should consider that he has a deep personal interest in these institutions, and not turn his own obligations in reference to them, off upon others. The time had been when this individual responsibility was properly felt, and public sentiment must be reversed, and brought back again to that point, before our common schools can prosper.

In connexion with this subject, Judge C. stated some facts of his own experience in the town in which he lived [Salisbury.] Several years ago he was a school teacher. The teachers of that town formed an association for mutual benefit. They also had a public examination of their scholars at the meeting house, at which the parents were present. While this system was pursued there was a marked improvement; but like every other good thing it eventually died away and their schools again declined. Last winter another attempt was made for the improvement of their schools. It was agreed to pay the school visitors for their services, and to require of them a strict examination, and a report of the condition of their schools. A public examination was held; and a new impulse given to teachers and pupils. The teachers also formed an association, and visited each other's schools; and a town association was formed, which appointed a committee to look up children who did not attend, and to clothe such as were destitute. It also asked aid of the young ladies of the town, which was readily granted, and by their assistance much good was done.

Judge C. said he was sensible that if nothing was called into action but mere excitement, no lasting good could be accomplished—the excitement would soon die away. The sober sense of the community must be enlisted in the cause, and we must go into the work as our fathers did. But the money making and political spirit of the day render the enlistment of an adequate public interest in the subject almost impossible. The aid of the press is necessary; but the political press is poisoned to death, and no help can come from it; and the religious press does not come forward as it ought. Perhaps it thought it was engaged in a higher object, but he regarded the diffusion of knowledge of the highest importance. If, then, the political and religious press failed in their duty in this respect, they ought to have a press of their own. Such a press they have, but it languished for want of support. Judge C. closed his address with an urgent appeal for a more extensive patronage of the Common School Journal.

*Danbury Times.*

#### BLANKS FOR SCHOOL RETURNS, 1838-40.

These blanks, addressed to the Clerk of each School Society, and to be filled out by the School Visitors, will be forwarded to

Rev. DAVID H. SHORT,	Danbury,	for FAIRFIELD Co.
ORIGEN S. SEYMOUR,	Litchfield,	" LITCHFIELD "
ADAMS WHITE,	Brooklyn,	" WINDHAM "
THOMAS S. PERKINS,	N. London,	" N. LONDON "
SAMUEL D. HUBBARD,	Middletown,	" MIDDLESEX "
CHARLES ROBINSON,	N. Haven,	" N. HAVEN "
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Com. of School Fund,	Hartford,	" HARTFORD "

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